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BULLETIN OF INFORMATION

REGARDING

CONSOLIDATION OF RURAL
SCHOOLS.

Issued by
E. T. FAIRCHILD,
State Superintendent of Public Instruction,
TOPEKA, KANSAS.

1908.

STATE PRINTING OFFICE,
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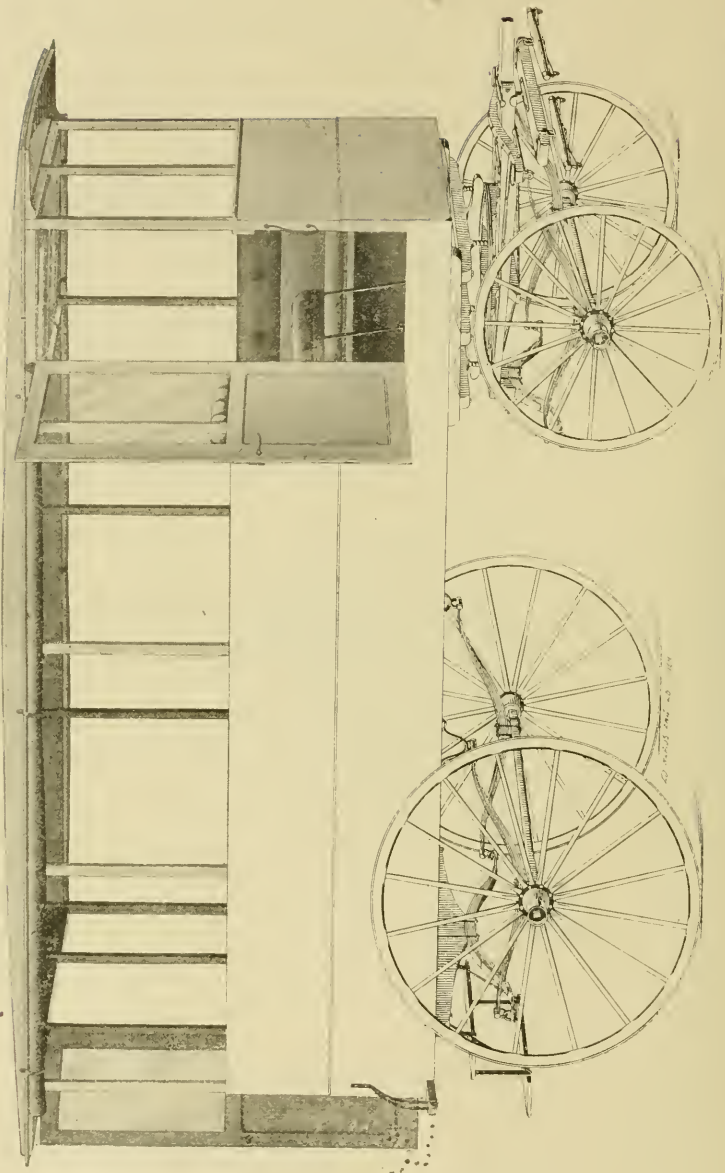
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SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION WAGON.
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CONSOLIDATION OF RURAL SCHOOLS.

The most pressing educational problem to-day is the rural school. Our University, State Agricultural College and Normal Schools have attained a degree of excellence and efficiency unparalleled in the history of our state. The denominational institutions, the high schools, and even the village schools, all report remarkable prosperity and increased activity. The great wave of prosperity that has made the past decade the most marvelous in the development of material resources has also found expression in the educational field. The state has recognized this and at the last session of the legislature nearly two million dollars were given to three state educational institutions. Every true friend of education rejoices because of this liberality, and because of the many evidences of increasing advantages to the youth of our state.

These institutions, including the high schools and village schools, have reached a condition where their future prosperity is practically assured. They have acquired a momentum that is bound to carry them forward surely and efficiently. The people of this state are fully aware of the value and worth of the work being done by this type of schools; it is a most pleasing situation and one of which the people of Kansas may well be proud.

However, there is a phase of our school work that has not felt this forward impulse. I refer particularly to the rural school. It is the deliberate judgment of many of our best educators and closest observers that no such progress as we have above described is to be found in the common or country school. While all eyes have been turned to the high school, to the college, and to the university, it is feared that the welfare of the rural school has been sadly overlooked.

While there are undoubtedly many excellent schools in the country to-day, and while many most capable and experienced teachers are working therein and doing their best for the children under their charge, yet the fact remains that a large per cent. of the teachers of this class are inexperienced, and many are most indifferently equipped. Much has been hoped, because of the marked increase of salaries in the rural schools in recent years, yet statistics do not indicate that with larger salaries have come better teachers.

Again, the average age of teachers in rural schools is continually lessening. In one county in eight years the average age has decreased from twenty-three to twenty years. While we have no recent statistics in the matter, it is probably true

that the average age of teachers in the country schools is to-day even less than twenty years. Probably more than one-third of the teachers engaged in the schools of the country districts last fall were wholly inexperienced. In some counties fully fifty per cent. of the teachers are engaged in their first school work.

These conditions, together with others that may be mentioned, are deplorable. It is not enough to know that the graded schools and colleges, which afford a training to but a small per cent. of the more than 500,000 boys and girls of this state, are prosperous and growing stronger every day. What we need, and must have, before Kansas can hope to take her proper place in the educational scale, is a system of education and facilities that insure the very best character of foundation work. The thousands of boys and girls who are now, many of them, being offered very indifferent educational opportunities, must have the same chance that is granted to their city cousins.

The type of district school that afforded a sufficient education to the children of a generation ago is no longer sufficient. Progress in every phase of home endeavor has been so rapid; methods of business have been so radically changed; competition has become so keen, that the boy of to-day who is to become the business man of to-morrow must have a decidedly wider and broader and more liberal training than that of our fathers.

In fifty years marvelous changes have taken place in the economics of rural life. The sickle, the flail, the crude machinery of every kind, has given place to the modern reaper, the thrasher, the riding-plow, the devices of every sort for efficiency and comfort on the farm.

The railroads have so modified relations and changed conditions that there is but little likeness left to the "good old times."

It is a new country-life that faces us to-day. Conditions for living have improved at an almost marvelous rate. Now the farmer, instead of spending time hunting helpers and arranging for interchange of work with his neighbors, uses the telephone to send to the near-by town or to call up the distant city for supplies needed at once. No longer is he content to receive his mail on Saturday, but now his letters, his daily city paper, with latest market quotations, are brought to his door every day. He is no longer satisfied with those a week old, or with market quotations that have lost their value.

Everything relative to the farm and farm life has been improved. Agricultural experts are daily solving problems related to the farm. Our agricultural colleges, through their farmers' institutes, their wheat and alfalfa and corn trains, their lectures on the science of dairying, their valuable suggestions as to soil fertility and the conservation of moisture, are making the problem of farming not alone interesting, but

vastly more profitable, and it is the boy and the girl of to-day who must be fitted by training and by opportunity to take up this ever-increasing problem. Everything relative to the farm and farm life has been improved in the past few years, and the up-to-date farmer takes advantage of all this because it pays to do so.

Have our country schools kept pace with this marvelous march forward? All the benefits of which the farmer has taken advantage have tended to make better his financial standing and interest, his social standing and interest. The great question then is this: Would it not pay as an investment to bring the school up to the same high standard of efficiency that is being enjoyed by the modern up-to-date farm? Is it not absolutely necessary that the farmer's children be educated in harmony with these many improvements? Is it not necessary to his future standing, financially and socially, to keep up with modern advancement at school as well as at home?

The proper education of the farm boys and girls cannot be neglected without finally bringing ruin upon the farming communities. If these advantages are not provided they will drift away early into other callings. If the right kind of schools are provided for the country boys and girls they will remain at home until they receive their general education, and then if they have gifts in other directions it will be time enough for them to seek special schools.

The old-time country school, as many of us remember it, has gone, never to return. The large attendance, the male teacher in the winter, the pupils ranging in age from six to twenty-one are no longer in evidence. In its place is the small school, and too often the old-time "good teacher" has gone to the city. The ambitious scholar follows him, often taking the family with him. Says the Illinois School Report: "Thinking men have long since discovered that if this emigration to the cities for higher education is to continue, the country as well as its schools will be sapped of its vitality, and this thought has taken form in the expression that 'the country child is entitled to as good educational privileges as the city child, and this too without breaking up the family home,' and that everything short of this is unfair to the child and unprofitable to the community."

SIZE AND COST OF SCHOOLS.

In a special bulletin published by the superintendent of public instruction of Michigan, in April, 1902, it appears that of 6452 districts of the state 51 had two pupils, or fewer, and held no schools; that 83 schools of the southern peninsula had five pupils or fewer; that the average attendance of these schools was three; that these 83 schools cost \$13,636, or an average of \$9.95 per pupil per month, or \$99.50 per year of ten months, though the number taught averaged fewer than six. It also appears that 1004 schools had fifteen or fewer;

that the average attendance of these schools was but eight; that the thousand schools cost \$200,478.13, or an average of \$199.67 each, and that the cost per pupil was \$4.16 per month, or \$41.60 per year of ten months. The same report says that the average cost per pupil in the *city* schools of Michigan is never over \$19.40 per year of ten months, high schools included, the average cost being much less.

From this it appears that over a thousand country schools in Michigan are maintained at a cost per pupil more than double that of the most expensive city schools. In addition to this fact the superintendent estimates that the country people of Michigan pay out annually over a million dollars for tuition and other expenses of their non-resident pupils from the country seeking higher learning in the city schools.

The figures from our own state are most startling! Of the 8603 districts there are 78 having an enrolment of five or less, 474 between five and ten, 1049 between ten and fifteen, and 1316 between fifteen and twenty—a total of 2917 with an enrolment of twenty or less. More than one-third of all the districts have an enrolment of twenty or less.

In the matter of average daily attendance there are 286 schools having five pupils or less, 1343 having between five and ten pupils, 1889 between ten and fifteen, and 1808 between fifteen and twenty; or a total of 5326 schools in this state having a daily average attendance of twenty or less; or 62 per cent. of the whole. In addition to all this there are 170 districts not maintaining schools, presumably because the schools are so small that they find it cheaper to send to other districts.

In these small districts a cost of \$50 to \$100 per pupil per year based on the average daily attendance is not uncommon in almost any county in the state. The pupils of those schools could be educated at a much lower expense per capita in a consolidated school that would be far more efficient than the small school.

By consulting the county superintendent as to the cost per capita for maintaining the small schools, their wastefulness will be revealed and the importance of abandoning them will become more evident.

The table on pages 7, 8, shows the number of small schools, by counties, and the average daily attendance therein.

When we reflect that it costs just as much to support a small school as one of thirty or more pupils, we catch some idea of the tremendous per capita cost of the Kansas rural school. Figures from the report of the superintendent of public instruction of Indiana for 1900 show that the cost of elementary education in the country in that state is over forty-eight per cent. higher than the cost of education in the city, including the high-school course.

A similar difference exists between the cost of maintaining the grades in the city schools and the cost of maintaining the rural school. In the one-teacher schools of Kansas the cost

SMALL SCHOOLS IN KANSAS.

STATISTICAL TABLE showing the number of districts reporting and the number of districts in each county having an average daily attendance of one to five, five to ten, ten to fifteen, and fifteen to twenty in 1906-'07.

| COUNTIES. | Districts re- porting... | One to five.. | Five to ten.. | Ten to fif- teen | Fifteen to twenty.... | Totals by counties.. |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Allen..... | 75 | 3 | 11 | 22 | 36 | |
| Anderson..... | 89 | 2 | 16 | 15 | 58 | |
| Atchison..... | 78 | 9 | 10 | 19 | 38 | |
| Barber..... | 75 | 10 | 22 | 12 | 57 | |
| Barton..... | 101 | 6 | 19 | 13 | 52 | |
| Bourbon..... | 110 | 8 | 26 | 28 | 62 | |
| Brown..... | 83 | 1 | 10 | 9 | 20 | |
| Butler..... | 159 | 3 | 29 | 52 | 116 | |
| Chase..... | 59 | 5 | 14 | 13 | 43 | |
| Chautauqua..... | 89 | 4 | 11 | 25 | 58 | |
| Cherokee..... | 101 | 4 | 5 | 25 | 34 | |
| Cheyenne..... | 56 | 9 | 26 | 19 | 55 | |
| Clark..... | 22 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 15 | |
| Clay..... | 101 | 12 | 27 | 24 | 63 | |
| Cloud..... | 106 | 7 | 25 | 25 | 57 | |
| Coffey..... | 101 | 1 | 12 | 20 | 51 | |
| Comanche..... | 33 | 6 | 11 | 5 | 22 | |
| Cowley..... | 140 | 4 | 16 | 34 | 94 | |
| Crawford..... | 123 | 2 | 12 | 17 | 59 | |
| Decatur..... | 99 | 2 | 17 | 32 | 79 | |
| Dickinson..... | 119 | 2 | 6 | 11 | 52 | |
| Doniphan..... | 68 | 2 | 5 | 11 | 30 | |
| Douglas..... | 85 | 3 | 9 | 15 | 27 | |
| Edwards..... | 48 | 2 | 12 | 16 | 41 | |
| Elk..... | 78 | 2 | 17 | 19 | 49 | |
| Ellis..... | 55 | 14 | 9 | 14 | 45 | |
| Ellsworth..... | 67 | 4 | 17 | 19 | 54 | |
| Finney..... | 35 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 19 | |
| Ford..... | 49 | 20 | 9 | 8 | 37 | |
| Franklin..... | 93 | 1 | 8 | 15 | 43 | |
| Geary..... | 40 | 1 | 8 | 10 | 26 | |
| Gove..... | 44 | 4 | 14 | 13 | 36 | |
| Graham..... | 84 | 5 | 17 | 28 | 70 | |
| Grant..... | 10 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 8 | |
| Gray..... | 33 | 2 | 15 | 6 | 29 | |
| Greeley..... | 12 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 8 | |
| Greenwood..... | 116 | 9 | 12 | 24 | 80 | |
| Hamilton..... | 17 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 15 | |
| Harper..... | 63 | 2 | 16 | 12 | 47 | |
| Harvey..... | 72 | 2 | 5 | 11 | 39 | |
| Haskell..... | 15 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 11 | |
| Hodgeman..... | 20 | 4 | 21 | 11 | 40 | |
| Jackson..... | 89 | 4 | 18 | 18 | 40 | |
| Jefferson..... | 96 | 5 | 14 | 23 | 42 | |
| Jewell..... | 158 | 1 | 30 | 36 | 114 | |
| Johnson..... | 95 | 1 | 11 | 20 | 57 | |
| Kearny..... | 10 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | |
| Kingman..... | 92 | 15 | 21 | 21 | 57 | |
| Kiowa..... | 42 | 4 | 9 | 11 | 34 | |
| Labette..... | 107 | 9 | 15 | 28 | 52 | |
| Lane..... | 44 | 4 | 13 | 14 | 37 | |
| Leavenworth..... | 77 | 3 | 6 | 10 | 19 | |
| Lincoln..... | 87 | 7 | 13 | 27 | 47 | |
| Linn..... | 99 | 9 | 19 | 19 | 47 | |
| Logan..... | 41 | 5 | 10 | 6 | 34 | |
| Ly on..... | 113 | 12 | 26 | 29 | 67 | |
| Marion..... | 117 | 13 | 20 | 24 | 57 | |
| Marshall..... | 140 | 4 | 18 | 30 | 96 | |
| McPherson..... | 120 | 2 | 12 | 22 | 66 | |
| Meade..... | 38 | 10 | 6 | 8 | 24 | |

SMALL SCHOOLS IN KANSAS—CONCLUDED.

| COUNTIES. | Districts re- porting... | One to five. | Five to ten. | Ten to fif- teen | Fifteen to twenty.... | Totals by counties.. |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Miami..... | 102 | 2 | 11 | 21 | 24 | 58 |
| Mitchell..... | 107 | 3 | 22 | 38 | 18 | 81 |
| Montgomery..... | 109 | ... | 8 | 15 | 27 | 50 |
| Morris..... | 85 | 1 | 13 | 20 | 26 | 60 |
| Morton..... | 8 | ... | ... | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Nemaha..... | 122 | 2 | 17 | 33 | 28 | 80 |
| Neosho..... | 97 | ... | 4 | 8 | 28 | 40 |
| Ness..... | 71 | 1 | 20 | 18 | 20 | 59 |
| Norton..... | 115 | 6 | 21 | 41 | 18 | 86 |
| Osage..... | 105 | 3 | 8 | 18 | 21 | 50 |
| Osborne..... | 113 | 4 | 17 | 40 | 25 | 86 |
| Ottawa..... | 93 | ... | 19 | 26 | 28 | 73 |
| Pawnee..... | 63 | 1 | 19 | 27 | 7 | 54 |
| Phillips..... | 126 | 1 | 16 | 33 | 35 | 85 |
| Pottawatomie..... | 120 | 4 | 27 | 31 | 24 | 86 |
| Pratt..... | 73 | 4 | 8 | 17 | 14 | 43 |
| Rawlins..... | 77 | 18 | 32 | 16 | 5 | 71 |
| Reno..... | 144 | 2 | 16 | 30 | 30 | 78 |
| Republic..... | 121 | 3 | 8 | 21 | 35 | 67 |
| Rice..... | 91 | 5 | 18 | 25 | 16 | 64 |
| Riley..... | 85 | 2 | 13 | 18 | 19 | 52 |
| Rooks..... | 102 | 3 | 17 | 41 | 22 | 83 |
| Rush..... | 71 | 1 | 18 | 21 | 11 | 51 |
| Russell..... | 65 | 4 | 14 | 8 | 12 | 38 |
| Saline..... | 86 | ... | 16 | 19 | 21 | 56 |
| Scott..... | 29 | ... | 13 | 9 | 2 | 24 |
| Sedgwick..... | 157 | 10 | 31 | 44 | 30 | 115 |
| Seward..... | 9 | ... | 4 | 3 | 1 | 8 |
| Shawnee..... | 96 | ... | 5 | 15 | 19 | 39 |
| Sheridan..... | 67 | ... | 27 | 14 | 14 | 55 |
| Sherman..... | 57 | 14 | 30 | 7 | 3 | 54 |
| Smith..... | 137 | ... | 13 | 37 | 42 | 92 |
| Stafford..... | 86 | 3 | 9 | 22 | 21 | 55 |
| Stanton..... | 11 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| Stevens..... | 14 | ... | 5 | 5 | 2 | 12 |
| Sumner..... | 171 | 7 | 38 | 60 | 35 | 140 |
| Thomas..... | 73 | 12 | 25 | 17 | 5 | 59 |
| Trego..... | 48 | 4 | 16 | 13 | 7 | 40 |
| Wabaunsee..... | 88 | ... | 15 | 27 | 15 | 57 |
| Wallace..... | 27 | 8 | 9 | 6 | ... | 23 |
| Washington..... | 144 | 1 | 14 | 35 | 37 | 87 |
| Wichita..... | 30 | 5 | 9 | 11 | 3 | 28 |
| Wilson..... | 99 | 2 | 6 | 18 | 27 | 53 |
| Woodson..... | 69 | 3 | 13 | 20 | 12 | 48 |
| Wyandotte..... | 40 | ... | 1 | 2 | 4 | 7 |
| Totals..... | 8,389 | 286 | 1,343 | 1,889 | 1,808 | 5,326 |

per pupil per month, based on the average daily attendance, is \$3.47.

By referring to the cost of maintaining the grades in representative city schools and maintaining the rural schools, shown in the table below, the great difference in the cost of maintenance is readily observed. This great difference exists notwithstanding the fact that the higher wages are paid for teachers in the graded schools.

We have collected statistics from a few counties in order that the illustrations may be as concrete as possible. We find that in the city of Hutchinson, Reno county, the average per capita

cost per month on the enrolment in the high school is \$1.76. Based on the average daily attendance we find it to be \$2.35. District No. 51 of the same county, with thirty pupils enrolled, shows a per capita cost of \$1.80, and a per capita cost on the average attendance of \$2.40. District No. 77 of the same county has thirteen pupils enrolled; the average cost on the enrolment is \$4.55, the average cost on attendance \$5.45.

Thus we have the extremes on enrolment, in Hutchinson \$1.76; in the small schools, same county, \$4.55. On average daily attendance, Hutchinson \$2.35, small school, \$5.45.

The table on page 10 tells its own story.

These small schools, then, of which we have 5326, cost greatly more per capita than our best and most highly organized city schools, including the high schools.

AVERAGE ENROLMENT AND AVERAGE ATTENDANCE OF RURAL SCHOOLS FOR THE WHOLE STATE.

Another view of the subject, and one which will be of interest to all concerned, is found in the table (p. 11), wherein by counties is given the number of rural one-teacher schools, and the average enrolment and average daily attendance therein by counties. From this it will be seen that the average enrolment of purely rural schools for the state is 24.7; that the average daily attendance for the state in these schools is 17.

It is further discovered from this table that there are but twelve counties in which the average daily attendance is over 20; forty-three counties in which the average daily attendance is from 16 to 20; that there are thirty-six counties having an average daily attendance of but from 11 to 15; and fourteen counties with an average daily attendance of from 7 to 10. On the other hand, the average daily attendance in cities of the first and second class is 38.

REDUCE TEACHING FORCE ONE-HALF.

If through consolidation or otherwise these rural schools could be brought to have an average attendance of say thirty-five pupils, the number of teachers required therein would be one-half the number now employed.

As a further illustration, the following table shows the comparative cost per capita per month of maintaining the rural schools of the counties given with the cost of maintaining the grades in the principal cities of said counties:

COST IN GRADES ON AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE.

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|
| Hutchinson | \$2 40 | Garden City | \$1 39 |
| Reno county | 3 64 | Finney county | 7 10 |
| Clay Center | 1 15 | Lawrence | 1 42 |
| Clay county | 2 90 | Douglas county | 2 70 |
| Wellington | 2 06 | El Dorado | 1 91 |
| Sumner county | 4 00 | Butler county | 4 15 |
| McPherson | 2 00 | Iola | 2 12 |
| McPherson county | 2 88 | Allen county | 2 80 |
| Oskaloosa | 2 55 | | |
| Jefferson county | 2 75 | | |

| COUNTY. | Town and district. | Enrolment. | Average attendance. | Per capita cost per month. | |
|----------------|-----------------------|------------|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | On enrolment. | On average attendance. |
| Reno..... | Hutchinson..... | 2,396 | 1,969 | Grades..... | |
| | District No. 51..... | 30 | 21 | H. S., \$1 76 | \$2 35 |
| | District No. 77..... | 13 | 11 | 1 80 | 2 40 |
| Shawnee..... | Topeka..... | 7,144 | 5,784 | 4 55 | 5 45 |
| | District No. 33..... | 40 | 27 | Grades, \$2 57 | \$2 97 |
| | District No. 94..... | 10 | 9 | H. S., 4 61 | 5 04 |
| Clay..... | Clay Center..... | 757 | 580 | 3 10 | 4 60 |
| | District No. 30..... | 25 | 22 | 4 60 | 5 10 |
| | District No. 85..... | 10 | 8 | Grades, \$0 64 | \$1 15 |
| Wyandotte..... | Kansas City..... | 10,636 | 8,130 | H. S..... | |
| | District No. 5..... | 43 | 28 | 1 75 | 2 00 |
| | District No. 45..... | 16 | 13 | 4 00 | 5 00 |
| Sumner..... | Wellington..... | 929 | 792 | Grades, \$1 69 | \$2 06 |
| | District No. 34..... | 22 | 14 | H. S..... | |
| | District No. 111..... | 10 | 7 | 2 50 | 3 85 |
| McPherson..... | McPherson..... | 777 | 620 | 5 40 | 7 75 |
| | District No. 15..... | 26 | 17 | Grades, \$1 50 | \$2 00 |
| | District No. 88..... | 15 | 10 | H. S..... | |
| Marion..... | Marion..... | 487 | 330 | 1 50 | 2 80 |
| | District No. 25..... | 21 | 12 | 3 95 | 5 90 |
| | District No. 44..... | 10 | 8 | Grades, \$2 40 | \$3 50 |
| Jefferson..... | Oskaloosa..... | 266 | 212 | 2 00 | 2 45 |
| | District No. 5..... | 28 | 23 | 2 75 | 3 40 |
| | District No. 72..... | 15 | 12 | Grades, \$1 19 | \$1 39 |
| Finney..... | Garden City..... | 918 | 488 | H. S., 2 52 | 3 75 |
| | District No. 8..... | 24 | 16 | 1 75 | 2 55 |
| | District No. 16..... | 10 | 7 | 5 10 | 7 30 |
| Douglas..... | Lawrence..... | 2,438 | 1,994 | Grades, \$1 15 | \$1 42 |
| | District No. 32..... | 26 | 21 | H. S., 1 56 | 1 87 |
| | District No. 79..... | 13 | 10 | 2 20 | 2 70 |
| Butler..... | El Dorado..... | 876 | 639 | 5 15 | 6 65 |
| | District No. 7..... | 22 | 19 | Grades, \$1 37 | \$1 91 |
| | District No. 124..... | 10 | 7 | H. S., 2 09 | 2 56 |
| Atchison..... | Atchison..... | 1,901 | 1,460 | 1 65 | 2 00 |
| | District No. 73..... | 30 | 16 | 4 30 | 6 10 |
| | Iola..... | 2,710 | 1,997 | Grades, \$1 45 | \$1 90 |
| Allen..... | District No. 27..... | 35 | 25 | H. S., 2 15 | 2 59 |
| | District No. 77..... | 16 | 9 | 1 40 | 2 60 |
| | | | | Grades, \$1 55 | \$2 12 |
| | | | | H. S., 3 67 | 4 58 |
| | | | | 1 70 | 2 40 |
| | | | | 2 65 | 4 65 |

But the financial question, however important, is not the most important consideration. The fatal weakness in these schools lies in their size. It is impossible that schools so small as many of these are should do the best work. With but a handful of pupils no teacher can secure the best results. The pupils themselves miss the incentive and inspiration that comes of numbers.

NUMBER OF ONE-TEACHER SCHOOLS, BY COUNTIES, AND AVERAGE ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE THEREIN.

| COUNTIES. | No. of schools. | Average enrollment. | Average daily attendance. | COUNTIES. | No. of schools. | Average enrollment. | Average daily attendance. |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Allen | 69 | 33.2 | 21.1 | Logan | 39 | 17.2 | 11.4 |
| Anderson | 81 | 25.0 | 16.5 | Lyon | 103 | 27.7 | 20.2 |
| Atchison | 73 | 31.3 | 20.5 | Marion | 99 | 29.2 | 21.5 |
| Barber | 68 | 18.9 | 12.8 | Marshall | 126 | 25.3 | 17.1 |
| Barton | 97 | 20.1 | 14.4 | McPherson | 111 | 26.1 | 19.1 |
| Bourbon | 100 | 29.3 | 18.8 | Meade | 34 | 18.6 | 16.0 |
| Brown | 72 | 33.8 | 26.5 | Miami | 95 | 28.0 | 21.5 |
| Butler | 147 | 23.9 | 15.7 | Mitchell | 102 | 21.0 | 15.5 |
| Chase | 50 | 20.7 | 13.7 | Montgomery | 101 | 29.7 | 20.9 |
| Chautauqua | 82 | 23.8 | 16.3 | Morris | 79 | 25.0 | 17.2 |
| Cherokee | 88 | 36.3 | 23.6 | Morton | 6 | 24.8 | 19.3 |
| Cheyenne | 54 | 15.8 | 9.4 | Nemaha | 113 | 26.1 | 16.7 |
| Clark | 19 | 14.0 | 8.9 | Neosho | 89 | 32.7 | 21.0 |
| Clay | 95 | 30.0 | 18.5 | Ness | 63 | 19.8 | 13.2 |
| Cloud | 100 | 26.6 | 17.1 | Norton | 110 | 21.9 | 15.0 |
| Coffey | 96 | 29.1 | 20.4 | Osage | 93 | 32.0 | 19.8 |
| Comanche | 30 | 17.1 | 10.1 | Osborne | 109 | 20.8 | 15.1 |
| Cowley | 135 | 24.5 | 16.8 | Ottawa | 89 | 21.3 | 15.6 |
| Crawford | 102 | 33.5 | 18.7 | Pawnee | 61 | 17.6 | 12.5 |
| Decatur | 94 | 23.4 | 15.1 | Phillips | 115 | 26.8 | 17.1 |
| Dickinson | 107 | 25.0 | 18.3 | Pottawatomie | 109 | 23.8 | 15.1 |
| Doniphan | 57 | 26.0 | 22.6 | Pratt | 65 | 26.5 | 18.0 |
| Douglas | 77 | 30.6 | 22.7 | Rawlins | 76 | 17.3 | 9.6 |
| Edwards | 45 | 19.9 | 13.3 | Reno | 128 | 26.5 | 18.6 |
| Elk | 71 | 23.9 | 15.9 | Republic | 113 | 27.4 | 18.7 |
| Ellis | 50 | 19.7 | 11.9 | Rice | 76 | 20.8 | 13.8 |
| Ellsworth | 60 | 18.6 | 13.5 | Riley | 80 | 24.3 | 17.3 |
| Finney | 34 | 16.5 | 7.7 | Rooks | 94 | 18.7 | 16.6 |
| Ford | 53 | 17.3 | 11.3 | Rush | 65 | 19.3 | 15.4 |
| Franklin | 83 | 30.1 | 22.1 | Russell | 54 | 21.3 | 13.3 |
| Geary | 39 | 24.0 | 16.6 | Saline | 80 | 23.0 | 17.0 |
| Gove | 44 | 20.6 | 14.2 | Scott | 30 | 18.5 | 11.2 |
| Graham | 81 | 21.4 | 14.5 | Sedgwick | 147 | 22.4 | 15.3 |
| Grant | 8 | 17.8 | 12.2 | Seward | 8 | 14.2 | 10.1 |
| Gray | 35 | 15.2 | 10.9 | Shawnee | 80 | 29.6 | 20.4 |
| Greeley | 14 | 20.0 | 11.1 | Sheridan | 65 | 18.1 | 10.7 |
| Greenwood | 106 | 25.2 | 16.9 | Sherman | 55 | 13.1 | 8.5 |
| Hamilton | 16 | 12.4 | 7.7 | Smith | 131 | 24.3 | 11.1 |
| Harper | 73 | 24.6 | 17.2 | Stafford | 81 | 27.3 | 17.3 |
| Harvey | 67 | 26.0 | 20.2 | Stanton | 11 | 15.6 | 13.0 |
| Haskell | 16 | 17.5 | 11.2 | Stevens | 13 | 18.6 | 12.7 |
| Hodgeman | 43 | 15.5 | 10.8 | Sumner | 156 | 19.0 | 13.8 |
| Jackson | 82 | 34.5 | 21.1 | Thomas | 69 | 19.1 | 10.6 |
| Jefferson | 86 | 30.5 | 21.4 | Trego | 48 | 18.7 | 12.4 |
| Jewell | 150 | 23.9 | 16.8 | Wabaunsee | 79 | 23.8 | 16.7 |
| Johnson | 82 | 26.5 | 18.4 | Wallace | 25 | 12.7 | 9.2 |
| Kearny | 14 | 17.4 | 13.1 | Washington | 134 | 26.3 | 18.7 |
| Kingman | 85 | 24.9 | 18.6 | Wichita | 28 | 14.6 | 9.8 |
| Kiowa | 41 | 19.9 | 12.5 | Wilson | 92 | 29.3 | 19.1 |
| Labette | 94 | 29.5 | 20.4 | Woodson | 65 | 25.3 | 17.2 |
| Lane | 42 | 15.8 | 12.2 | Wyandotte | 22 | 37.0 | 20.6 |
| Leavenworth | 68 | 36.5 | 25.0 | | | | |
| Lincoln | 82 | 23.4 | 17.8 | Total | 7,756 | | |
| Linn | 92 | 30.2 | 20.3 | Average for state | | 24.7 | 17.0 |

As soon as the boy and girl are free from the operation of the compulsory-attendance law, they too often leave the school simply because they find so little to attract. In these small schools it frequently happens that there is not a single scholar above the age of twelve or thirteen. Or, if the pupil holds out

until the age limit, he probably will find but one or two in his grade.

To undertake to study under such conditions with enthusiasm or profit is most discouraging. As a result the pupil goes more and more reluctantly to school. His parents finally give up the unequal struggle, or, at a time when the child most needs the restraints and friendly service of the home, sends him to the town. It is not the young child that suffers so much because of the small school; it is the boy or girl of fourteen and over, who, because of the depressing surroundings, because of the lack of incentive, drops out of school.

Reports, both in this and other states, show that the chances of these smaller schools getting a good teacher are very small indeed. In Iowa we find that for 1901 more than one-third of all the teachers were inexperienced. This, as we have stated, is true in this state. The larger and more attractive schools naturally secure the most experienced teachers, as a rule. It is further true that when a teacher once demonstrates her ability, she is called to the village or city school, so that the great army of inexperienced teachers usually find their training in the country. These are but a part of the weaknesses that inhere in our present rural-school system.

It is held by all students of this problem that the only remedy is the consolidating or uniting of two or three or more small or weak schools into one.

Consolidation, in its fullest sense, means the disorganization of two, three or more school districts and uniting them into one large school district, organizing in it a large central school, and, if necessary, transporting the pupils thereto. In its fullest sense, it means the disorganization of the small schools of a territory of about the size of a township and the formation of one central school.

Consolidation may be effected by the disorganization of the smaller school districts and the transportation of their pupils to strong central schools already existing.

Another type of consolidation is where the school district transports its pupils to another school and pays their tuition.

Consolidation in its complete form implies the transportation of the pupils at the expense of the district in comfortable covered wagons, properly lighted and heated, large enough to hold from sixteen to twenty-four pupils and driven by a driver under bond and contract as to regularity, habits and protection and control over the children.

It also implies some changes in the buildings. The change is sometimes effected by moving one or more of the best school buildings of the district to the location of another school building, thus providing two, three or more schoolrooms at one place.

At first thought consolidation would seem expensive. Experience, however, demonstrates that this is not true to any considerable degree. By combining small schools, fewer teach-

ers are needed than under the separate system, thus saving a certain outlay.

While several buildings are now necessarily maintained, under the new plan but one needs to be provided and cared for.

IDEA NOT A NEW ONE.

That consolidation is not a new movement is apparent from the fact that the first school of this type was established in 1874. Since then the idea has grown until consolidated schools, to a greater or less extent, have been established in more than thirty states of the Union. Ohio has 157 centralized or consolidated schools. Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota and Colorado are all rapidly abandoning weak schools and establishing in place thereof two-, three- or four-teacher schools.

Consolidation was first undertaken in 1874, at Quincy, Mass., under the law of 1865. In 1898 consolidation had been undertaken in sixty-five per cent. of the towns (townships) of that state, and the amount of consolidation has been doubled since that date.

In the report of the board of education for Massachusetts for the year 1904-'05 we discover that the process of consolidation has gone on steadily from year to year, as shown by the steady increase of expenditures for conveyance:

| YEAR. | Amount expended. | YEAR. | Amount expended. |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| 1888..... | \$22,118 38 | 1897..... | \$123,032 41 |
| 1889..... | 24,145 12 | 1898..... | 127,409 22 |
| 1890..... | 30,648 68 | 1899..... | 141,753 84 |
| 1891..... | 38,726 07 | 1900..... | 151,773 47 |
| 1892..... | 50,590 41 | 1901..... | 165,596 91 |
| 1893..... | 63,617 68 | 1902..... | 178,297 64 |
| 1894..... | 76,608 29 | 1903..... | 194,967 35 |
| 1895..... | 91,136 11 | 1904..... | 213,220 93 |
| 1896..... | 105,317 13 | 1905..... | 236,415 40 |

In Maine 653 districts were disorganized from 1890 to 1905. The number of districts disorganized in that time is one-fourth of the number of districts still remaining in existence in that state.

In Virginia the number of consolidated schools increased from 130 in 1906 to 162 in 1907.

In North Carolina, in the two years ending in 1903, 1200 small districts were consolidated.

Consolidation began in Ohio in 1892. The number of consolidated schools increased from 92 in 1906 to 157 in 1907, making an increase of 65 in one year. There are 35 consolidated schools in two counties of that state, and in Ashtabula county, where consolidation began, there are 21 consolidated schools. Consolidation grows most by spreading from where it is started.

From the report of State Supt. Fassett Cotton, of Indiana, the number of consolidated schools increased from 280 to 418



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL, MILTON, SUMNER COUNTY.
Showing three buildings brought together for use after consolidation.

in the two years ending in 1907. The number of schools abandoned in that time increased from 679 to 1314. For consolidation nine counties in 1906 had each abandoned 25 schools or more, and five counties had each abandoned 40 schools or more. The number of pupils transported increased from 5356 to 16,034, and in 1906 17,000 children of the rural districts of that state were attending the graded schools of towns and cities.

In response to a letter of inquiry addressed to the state superintendent of Indiana as to the present standing of consolidation in that state, I quote the following reply:

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., September 26, 1907.

Supt. E. T. Fairchild, Topeka, Kan.:

MY DEAR SIR—There is a strong movement in Indiana toward consolidation. For a number of years there has been a law enabling township trustees to abandon schools with an average daily attendance of twelve or fewer. The last legislature strengthened that law by compelling township trustees to abandon all schools that have an average daily attendance of twelve or fewer and consolidate such schools. It also provided that the township trustees may abandon all schools that have an average daily attendance of fifteen or fewer. This new law is hastening consolidation. I am not in a position to present to you much more information than is contained in the last report of this department, further than to say that this legislation is closing about a thousand of our district schools this year.

Yours sincerely,

F. A. COTTON, *State Superintendent Public Instruction.*

In 1906 Iowa disorganized 76 schools in fourteen counties to form 30 consolidated schools. Seven of the consolidated schools are in one county. Consolidation in general has grown mainly in communities adjacent to consolidated districts.

Thus it is seen that consolidation is no longer an experiment. It is progressing steadily in many of the states and rapidly in a few.

KANSAS.

The first school of this type was established in this state in 1898, although the preparatory steps were taken in 1896, a special law provided in 1897, and the schools of Green Garden township, Ellsworth county consolidated in 1898.

Since then the movement has developed in this state until, in 1907, some twenty counties have consolidated schools, numbering in all 27 schools. In addition to that number 130 school districts discontinued their schools and transported their pupils to other districts.

While those schools that were discontinued do not come under the law for consolidation, the effect has been the same. It is hoped that the plan of discontinuing the smaller schools and sending the pupils to other schools will be adopted quite largely. The natural result would be the disorganization of the small districts and consolidation to form strong schools.

Quite a number of large, strong, consolidated districts are now in process of formation. However, not enough schools of this type have been established in the state to offer the proper object-lesson. While the consolidation of two districts is an improvement, the full result and benefits are not reached short of the formation of large consolidated schools of three or more teachers.

Although the work is being undertaken very actively in many counties of the state, the most important results so far have been secured in Sedgwick county. Superintendent Colville, of that county, reports that the proposition of consolidation has carried in five school districts; that five other districts have carried the proposition at Rose Hill to form a joint consolidated district. The superintendent also reports that such districts are in process of formation at Derby, Colwich and Maize, and that almost every neighborhood in the county has asked for consolidation meetings.

Among the more prominent consolidated schools in the state are those at Lorraine, in Ellsworth county; Burns, in Marion county; Union No. 2, Union No. 4 and Chase consolidated school, in Rice county; Portis, in Osborne county; Haven, in Reno county; Milton, in Sumner county; Pearl and Union No. 2, in Dickinson county; and Atlanta, in Cowley county.

Other consolidated schools in the state are districts Nos. 1A and 2A, in Anderson county; Hymer, in Chase county; No. 87, in Douglas county; No. 99, in Franklin county; Corwin, in Harper county; Haviland, in Kiowa county; Winona and Russell Springs, in Logan county; Bancroft, in Nemaha county; Agra, in Phillips county; Buhler, in Reno county; Narka, in Republic county; Union No. 1 and Union No. 2, in Rooks county; and Viola, in Sedgwick county.

The following reports made at the Superintendents' Conference, held in Topeka in August last, provide additional and detailed information as to certain of the consolidated districts.

Report of Supt. W. S. Higgs, on consolidation in Rice county:

There are three consolidated schools in Rice county, designated as Union 2, Union 3, and Union 4.

Unions 3 and 4 were the first to organize, June 19, 1903. Union 3 (Chase) already had a school building of three rooms, which accommodated all the pupils of that district, consolidation adding only about fifteen pupils to that school. Chase is a town of about 225 people. Union 3 contemplates building a new school building in the near future.

Union 4 is an entirely rural district. This district at first moved two of their old schoolhouses together and fixed them up and used them temporarily, until last fall, when the people built a fine, up-to-date building, costing for everything about \$5000.

Union 2 was organized May 24, 1905. Only three districts were disorganized, and all large schools. A fine, new school building was built, also barns and sheds for horses and wagons, costing when completed \$4500.

The three consolidated schools were composed of ten districts, which were disorganized in 1903 and 1905, respectively. The year before consolidation the census enrolment for the ten districts was 301; enrolment in school, 258; average daily attendance, 187; cost of maintaining the schools, \$4149; cost per capita, \$22.20.

AFTER CONSOLIDATION.

The annual reports of the three consolidated schools for the year ending June 30, 1907, are as follows: Census enrolment, 297; enrolled in school, 272; average attendance, 217; cost of maintaining schools, \$5283, cost per capita, \$24.34.

Before consolidation nine teachers were employed (district 18 had but five pupils and sent to Chase for several years) and received an average salary of \$41. Seven teachers now do the work and receive an average salary of \$54.65.

The cost of transportation last year was, approximately, \$1.50 per month per pupil. The pupils are conveyed in enclosed wagons, which are furnished with sheet-iron stoves, and it is no trouble to keep the children comfortable. In a few instances the board have arranged with isolated families to furnish their own conveyance.

A COMPARISON OF THE WORK DONE.

Last year there were 143 graduates from the common schools in Rice county. Of this number the graded schools of the county, of which there were eight, furnished 68, leaving 75 for the district schools and the three consolidated schools. Of the district schools, 45 of the number turned out 42 graduates, and the *three consolidated schools* 33.

Of the union schools 58 were on examination, and 33 passed with a general average of 85.7 per cent. Of the district schools 90 were on examination, and 42 passed with a general average of 83.9 per cent.

The per cent. of attendance, etc., of the ten districts consolidated for the year preceding consolidation and the year following:

Before consolidation: Per cent. of census enrolled, 85; per cent. of enrolment attending, 72; per cent. of census attending, 62.

After consolidation: Per cent. of census enrolled, 91; per cent. of enrolment attending, 80; per cent. of census attending, 73.

Area of districts: Union 2, twenty-three square miles; Union 3, twenty square miles; Union 4, twenty-eight square miles.

The routes vary in length from five to nine miles, but few of the pupils ride over five miles.

Pupils have their regular seats in the wagons and are directly in charge of the driver, who is responsible to the principal and board for

their conduct, and so far as I can learn but very little trouble arises about the conduct.

There is practically no tardiness made by pupils who are transported.

SUCCESS OF CONSOLIDATION.

Consolidation of rural schools is a success, because of the better results secured. The attendance is greatly increased, and I think upon investigation the same is true in other places.

It does away with tardiness, and so far as I know not one of the wagons has ever been late. The increased number of pupils in the classes increases the interest and better work is done. Because of fewer classes longer time is secured for recitations and the result is more thorough work. Children go to school with comfort in bad weather. Habits of regularity and punctuality are inculcated—no small part of a proper education. The opportunity of the bully to impose upon smaller children on the way to and from school is taken away. As a rule the best teachers are in the graded schools; besides, it makes close and better supervision possible.

I have talked with some who opposed consolidation, and after having given it a trial they are loud in their praise of the results obtained, and not one is willing to go back to the old way. I am planning to have a meeting of school-district officers some time this fall, when one of the subjects to be discussed will be "consolidation." I shall endeavor to have some one who lives in a consolidated district, and who is able to handle the subject thoroughly, to talk on the transportation phase of the subject.

Report of Supt. P. D. Scott, of Osborne county, on "Consolidation":

In Osborne it means the consolidation or formation of but one district. We have had better success in forming consolidated districts with adjoining counties than in our own. In the formation of the consolidated district of which I shall speak Smith county is a factor. We are now forming another one in which Russell county will be a factor. I believe consolidation is the solution of a great many questions that we have been considering since we met here yesterday. I am glad that Mr. Fairchild gave this an important place upon the program, because I think it is, of all things we have discussed, the most important.

In June, 1905, district No. 19 of Smith county, embracing six sections, districts Nos. 19 and 27, Osborne county, embracing altogether nine sections, voted to form a consolidated district, so that the district now comprises fifteen sections. The district now has a valuation of \$100,000. The people were very enthusiastic over the consolidation. It seemed to stir up enthusiasm in school matters wonderfully.

After consolidation the people concluded they needed a new school-house, and at an expense of \$6000 erected a nice four-room building. Consolidation has certainly brought about a great interest in school matters in this portion of the county. At first there was some opposition from those who lived some distance from the building. Now that they see the advantages there is no longer further criticism. The enrolment last year was 157. You know what that means in the way of interest, both in the grades and in the high-school work. They are also establishing a high-school course of three years—one teacher and one assistant.

Another district in our county, though not consolidated, but containing eighteen sections, transports its children. The longest distance traveled was three and three-fourths miles. The carrier makes a certain point designated at a certain hour, and all pupils to be transported meet at that point, and they are returned to the same point in the evening. The cost per month in this case was \$22.50. A distinct advantage that grew out of this transportation was the greater regularity in attendance.

In district No. 19, a portion of the consolidated district first mentioned, the pupils are not hauled by the district. The longest distance

traveled is four and three-fourths miles. The board has built a pretty fair barn on the school-grounds, providing ample room for horses, and those who live in distant parts of the district drive their own rigs, put their horses up in the barn, and return home in the evening.

From everything that I have been able to observe in my own county I heartily indorse the plan of consolidation. I expect to hold this winter as many township meetings throughout the county as I can. At these times, I shall do my best to talk consolidation.

Supt. James A. Ray, Marion county, on the topic, "How Consolidation is Viewed in Marion County, and What it Has Done for the Districts Concerned," says:

Our consolidated school is located at Burns, a small but enterprising little town in the southeastern part of the county. It is a consolidation of five districts, three of Marion county and two of Butler county. The school has now been in operation for three years. Two years ago a \$9000 schoolhouse was erected and equipped with the most modern apparatus. A four-year high-school course has been added, and six teachers are employed, including a special teacher of music.

The enrolment last year reached 206 pupils. Thirty-six of this number were enrolled in the high school, and I am informed that the enrolment in the high school this year will reach at least fifty, and that a large majority of this number are boys and girls who live on the farm. This, is seems to me, demonstrates that the people of our rural communities will give their boys and girls a high-school education if the high school is brought to them.

Five wagons are used to transport the pupils to and from school. These wagons are constructed especially for this purpose and are as comfortable and convenient as can be made. In severe winter weather they are tightly covered, the beds and sides are heavily padded, and arrangements are made for putting in an oil-stove. In short, everything is done that can be done to keep the children from suffering from the effects of cold weather. Each wagon is constructed to hold about twenty children. Most of the wagons are driven by high-school boys, and the routes are so planned that no wagon has to be driven more than six and one-half miles. The cost varies according to the distance driven. It is all the way from twenty dollars to thirty dollars, the last-named amount being the highest price paid for any wagon. The driver is made responsible for the conduct of the pupils in the wagon, and if there should be misconduct of any kind on the way to and from school, the driver reports it to the teacher of said children. As far as I have been able to ascertain, there has not as yet been the slightest objection raised to the mode of transportation by a single patron. Every one seems to be perfectly satisfied with it. I am told that so far but one wagon has been tardy, and that was because of the lameness of one of the horses.

Statistics not only show that the average daily attendance is at least twenty per cent. better than it was under the old system, but also show that tardiness has been diminished at least forty per cent.

The cost so far is a little more under this system than it was under the old system. Under the old system, the average levy for the year 1903 was fourteen mills. Under this it has required a levy each year of twenty-four mills. However, to the best of my knowledge, there has been no objection made by any one to the extra cost. I have been over a greater part of the district, and I failed to find a person who wanted to go back to the old system.

As to what consolidation has done for the districts concerned, may be summed up as follows: It has given them a good graded school with close supervision; it has given them a large, modern, commodious school building, well equipped with good apparatus, well ventilated, and steam heated; it has given them a good high-school course at home, and without additional cost; it has given them the advantage of a special teacher of music. A manual-training room has been provided for; also a gym-

nasium. It has increased the average daily attendance twenty per cent.; it has diminished tardiness forty per cent.; it has given them more efficient teachers and a longer term of school; it is an advantage to the health of the children. And I am told on good authority that the price of land has materially increased since the organization of the school.

The consolidated district has a valuation of \$219,651.

The success of this school is working a revolution for consolidation in other communities of the county. School boards from other districts have visited the Burns school, and those of them who were against consolidation before were converted to it. We expect to organize, before the year is over, at least three consolidated schools.

Supt. W. E. Hagy, Ellsworth county, on the topic, "What the High Schools of our Consolidated Schools have Accomplished in Ellsworth County," reports:

We have in Ellsworth county a consolidated school that has many elements of strength, especially from a financial point of view.

The district includes an area of 25½ sections of land, including a small village, and has an assessed valuation of \$63,000. We have never levied more than fifteen mills for the maintenance of the school. The attendance at this school runs from 100 to 120. It is certainly much better than under the old system.

Another great advantage is that of better supervision; and last, but not least, is the better school spirit that prevails in the district, and in this respect it is very different from the single-district system.

In this district there are always from ten to fifteen who finish the common-school course, and this is quite a per cent. in excess of the number that will finish under the single-district system. The reason for this is probably the inducement that offers to enter the high school in the same building. In the high school there are from twenty to twenty-five pupils. Every year we have from two to four graduates. This school maintains a three-years course. It provides for three years of German, this being in a German community; has three years of English, with algebra, geometry, and a number of the sciences.

A large number of those who have graduated from this high school have entered some higher school of learning. This is a matter of great pride to the community. I am certain that if the single-district plan had prevailed but few of those would have taken courses in higher institutions of learning. The people of this district pride themselves very much upon their schools.

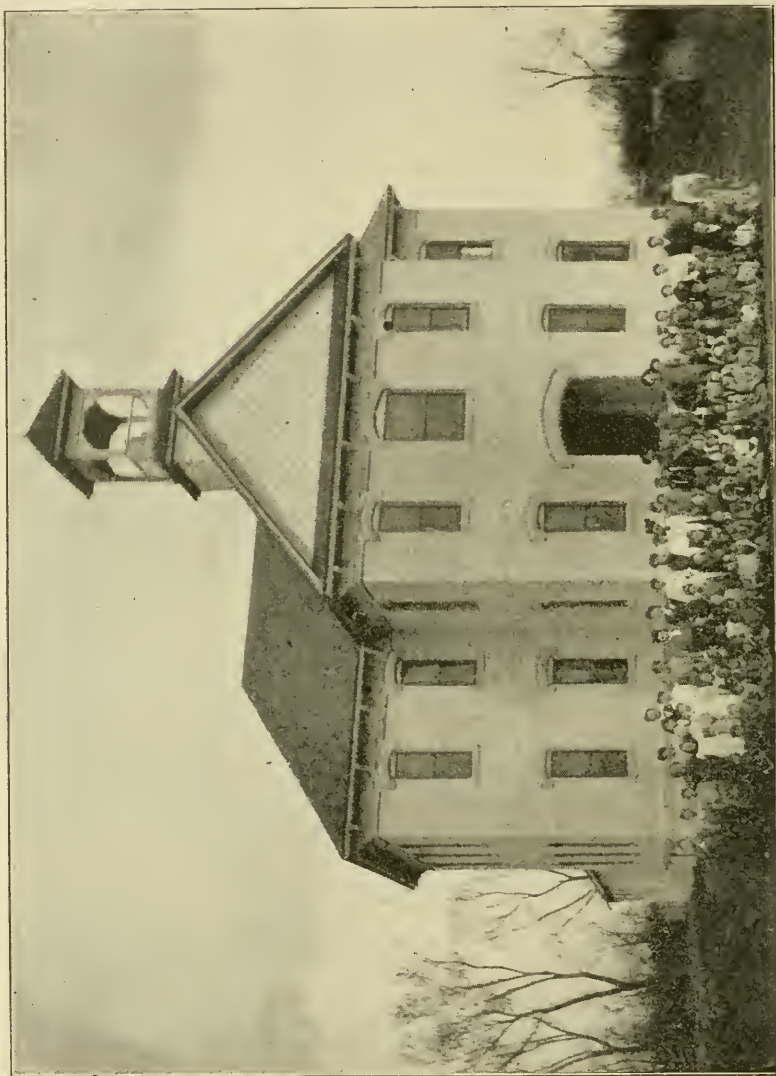
The following report of visits made to the consolidated schools of Milton, Sumner county, and Burns, Marion county, by C. C. Starr, assistant state superintendent of public instruction, is interesting:

MILTON, SUMNER COUNTY.

On January 16, 1908, I visited the Sumner county consolidated school. The Sumner consolidated district was formed by the consolidation of five separate school districts in 1904, and the central school is located in a small village containing, at the time of consolidation, probably 50 inhabitants, and containing to-day about 140 inhabitants. The thermometer registered about twelve degrees above zero the day I visited the school. In this district the parents provide their own transportation. I found at the schoolhouse twelve one-horse single-seated buggies, two saddle-horses, and a bicycle. Although the day was cold, the attendance was up to the average.

For the horses a well-arranged shed 24 x 48 feet, containing twenty-four stalls, has been constructed on the school-grounds.

The larger boys living within a radius of a mile or two walk to school. The parents living beyond two miles from the schoolhouse are paid fifteen cents per family per day for the transportation of pupils.



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL, MILTON, SUMNER COUNTY. (New building.)

The original plan was to transport the pupils in large wagons at the expense of the district, but that plan has not yet been tried, and thus far there seems to be a general satisfaction with the present mode of transportation.

The consolidation began by two schoolhouses being moved to the site of the central schoolhouse at Milton, with a view to moving them back if consolidation should not prove satisfactory. The remaining old houses and school sites were sold for something between \$600 and \$800.

An extensive inquiry revealed the fact that there is not a person in the consolidated district who would be willing to return to the old way. The general opinion prevails that the consolidated school is far superior to the district schools maintained before consolidation. It would seem that a more general satisfaction with the present system could hardly exist than that found in the district. There is but little tardiness, and those who drive are as prompt in attendance as those who live near the schoolhouse, and the school spirit is fine.

The first year after consolidation two teachers were required instead of five for the separate schools the year before. For the next two years three teachers were employed. A high-school course of two years is being maintained, and a special high-school teacher employed, making four teachers in all in the school this year. In 1905 or 1906 a fine gray brick four-room schoolhouse was erected, at a cost of something over \$6000 for the building alone. The two rooms on the second floor are separated by a movable partition that can easily be raised to turn the rooms into a commodious assembly hall. A lecture course is maintained, and the assembly hall is used for the general assembly purposes of the town and community. The building is heated by a furnace.

The school has a well-selected library of over 200 volumes. The school is also supplied with dictionaries, encyclopedias and a good supply of material for the primary department. Sixty-five volumes were added this year.

The area of the school-grounds is between three and four acres. The chief game played by the boys is baseball, and the girls have been playing basket-ball preceding the present school year. The teachers are experienced, and most of them have had normal or college training. The length of term is eight months.

I found the enrolment January 16, 1908, to be, in the first and second grades, 26; third, fourth and fifth grades, 28; sixth, seventh and eighth grades, 43; high school, 13; making a total of 110 thus far enrolled. The number of high-school pupils from the town of Milton is 3, and the number of high-school students enrolled from the country is 10, indicating that the proportion of high-school students from the country is larger than the proportion from the town.

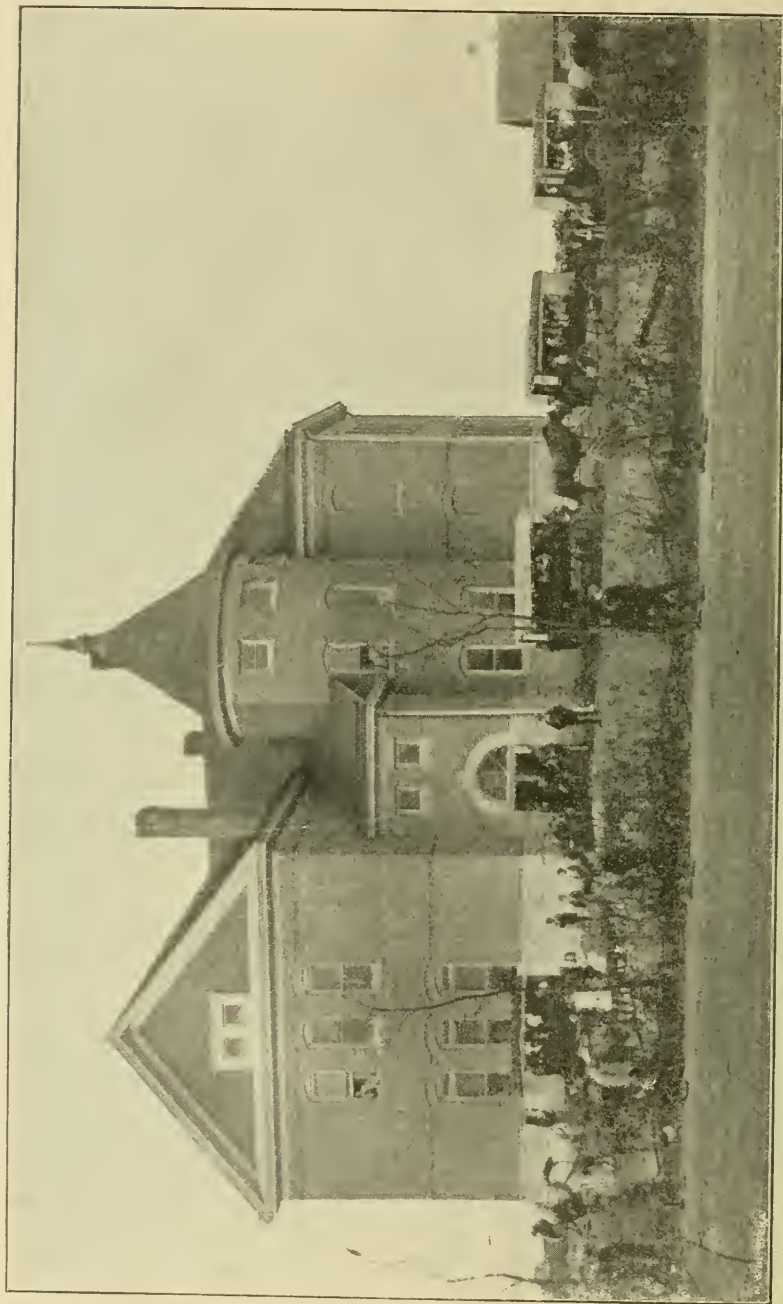
The advantages mentioned are: A much better school; teachers have fewer classes and have time to do the teaching much better; the pupils have high-school advantages at home and know that they have a much better school.

BURNS CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL, MARION COUNTY.

The Burns school was consolidated in 1904. The district was originally formed out of five separate school districts. In 1906 an additional district made application for admission to the consolidated district and it was admitted, so that now the consolidated district consists of what were originally six separate school districts, and the area comprised is forty-three square miles, or considerably more than a congressional township. While the last district that joined the consolidated district is farther from the central school than is ordinarily advised for such districts, that district estimated that the advantages of the consolidated school would be superior to the disadvantages of the long distance to school. Experience has demonstrated the truth of this.

Another district, lying outside, is sending seven pupils and paying their tuition.

Before consolidation the Burns district employed two teachers and di



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL, BURNS, MARION COUNTY, KANSAS.

not have a high school. The year following four teachers were required. The next year they had five teachers, and now six teachers are employed. The school occupies a modern six-room school building. A four-year high-school course is maintained which admits to the University of Kansas. Two high-school teachers are employed, one of whom was added in 1907.

While the population of Burns is about the same as the population of the remainder of the consolidated districts, a majority of the pupils attending the high school are from the country. The pupils in the upper grades (who recall their experience as pupils in the smaller rural schools) unanimously preferred the consolidated school. The reasons the pupils gave for the preference are as follows: Their school now has better teachers, there are more pupils to associate with, the larger classes are more interesting, they make more progress, understand their lessons better, and teachers have time to give the proper amount of attention to each subject. It is more agreeable to ride the long distance to school than to walk to the country schools.

Upon inquiry from the pupils who attend from the country as to what their chances would have been of attending high school if the consolidated school had not been formed, a very large majority stated that the chances are that they would not have had an opportunity to secure a high-school education. A few stated that they thought they would have been able to attend a high school as their parents told them that they had intended to try to send them away to a high school.

At the close of school I selected the wagon that goes to the most remote portion of the district, with a view to sharing the experience of the pupils while being transported. The distance to the end of the trip was ten and one-half miles—a distance much greater than is ordinarily recommended for transportation. The time required to make the trip was one hour and thirty minutes. The pupils stated that they liked to ride and did not get tired. Some said that they get a little cold sometimes—a suggestion that the wagons should be heated in the coldest weather. Neither drivers nor pupils expressed any dissatisfaction with the mode of transportation, and the people from the country with whom I conversed expressed themselves as being entirely satisfied with their system of transportation.

After extensive inquiry, no person could be found in the district who would be willing to go back to the old system of separate small schools. There is a general belief that the schools are far better than under the old plan, and that the community, through consolidation, has taken a long step forward educationally.

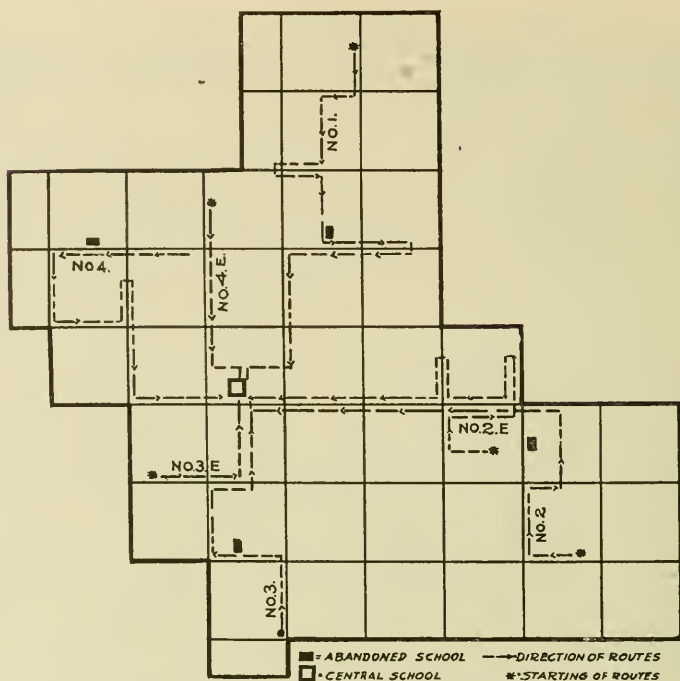
Mr. M. C. Martin, principal of the school, reported that the positions of the teachers are more desirable than those in the rural schools, that the district can always secure the best teachers from the rural schools of the surrounding country, and that they would teach for lower wages in the consolidated school.

Pupils in upper grades who recall the old way always vote unanimously in favor of the consolidated school. It is more to the interest of the country than to the town to consolidate, where consolidation is with a town school. Consolidation has practically eliminated tardiness. The outdoor exercises are basket-ball, baseball and track work.

J. S. Crawford, who has been treasurer of the consolidated school district since its organization, and who before consolidation was a teacher in the Burns school, gave the following information:

"Most of the drivers of the wagons are trustworthy young men attending the high school. On the whole they prove to be the most satisfactory drivers. One wagon is driven very satisfactorily by a woman. The wagons are owned by the district and can be entirely closed. The drivers contract to keep the wagons in repair. The cost of the wagons was \$130 each. There are plenty of applications by persons desiring to secure an appointment as driver. During the day the teams are kept in the sheds that have been erected on the school-grounds.

"In but a few cases has it been necessary to use three horses on ac-



THE BURNS CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT.

count of muddy roads, and it has never been necessary to use a larger number.

"In practice the pupils see the wagons coming and are ready to enter as soon as the wagons arrive. No difficulty has been experienced on account of waiting for pupils who are not ready. There is no demand for a mode of transportation other than the one now in use.

"Fewer, on account of sickness, are absent from the country than from the town. In case of sickness the pupil is taken to the doctor, and, if advisable, the pupil is driven home in a closed carriage at the expense of the district.

"All the patrons of the district are satisfied with the consolidated school. The schools are now 100 per cent. better than they were before consolidation.

"The increase in the value of real estate throughout the consolidated district on account of the consolidated schools is at least five dollars per acre. The first question asked by people wanting to buy land in the neighborhood is whether the land is inside consolidated districts. I have known of a number of men having refused to purchase land because it is located outside of the consolidated district."

The following letter from Mr. W. E. Peyton, editor of the *Burns Citizen*, and a resident of the consolidated district, contains most interesting views as to the value in dollars and cents to a community of a consolidated school:

BURNS, KAN., March 30, 1908.

Supt. E. T. Fairchild, Topeka, Kan.:

MY DEAR SIR—Having been requested by you to briefly state the relation of a consolidated school to land values, will say that we have in

Burns, a city of 450 people, an ideal, in-every-way satisfactory consolidated school that no one would part with for any other plan. It does give satisfaction in every respect.

Its relation to land values is hard to get at, through the fact that many other things are brought to bear upon real estate values, but the proposition is this: If a good school is of any value to adjoining land, then it does affect land values, and if the method of conducting the school is improved upon, then it increases the value of land. Another fact pertinent to this question is that all our real estate agents push the consolidated school in advertising and in conversation with buyers as a primary reason for purchasing, either for a home or an investment. It has been my experience in the real estate business that a man will pay more for land that has the very best school facilities. It is my opinion that our consolidated school in Burns has added an average value of not less than five dollars per acre on every acre in the district, and I think that all the patrons of this school and the business men of the city will bear me out in this statement, and will consider it a very conservative estimate.

Having sold land, and knowing conditions both before and after the consolidation plan went into operation, I am safe in saying that if depreciation ever does set in on land that it will be demonstrated beyond dispute that our land will sell for five dollars an acre more, all other conditions being equal, than any city without school facilities of this high class.

A few of its features, as we know them, are that a child can get a high-school education, be ready to enter the State University, and yet remain at home under parental supervision while doing this; a better corps of teachers can be maintained at a smaller expense than under the old plan, and each pupil receive more personal attention from the teacher in a graded school than is possible to give them in a country school; the classes are larger in all departments, stimulating competitive work, a strong factor in the development of a child. Light, heat and ventilation are supplied in a healthy manner. It wholly eliminates tardiness and preserves the health of the pupil in the country district whose constitution will not stand walking through mud and snow.

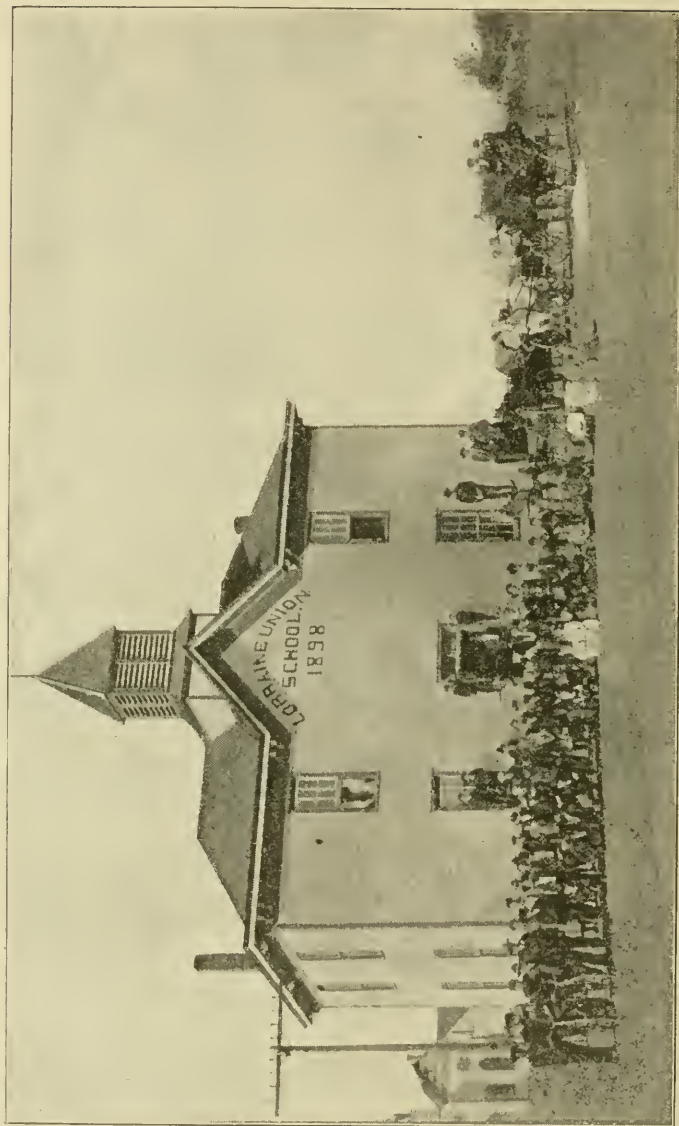
In county contests, the country district pupils, that otherwise would be entirely ignored, are enabled to take a prominent and dignified part. If the proof of the pudding is in the eating, we Burns people, taxpayers and all, have proved the merits of the consolidated plan to our entire satisfaction.

Any one desiring any further information concerning our school and its work will have their questions promptly answered by addressing,

W. E. PAYTON, Burns, Kan.

Supt. E. S. McCormick, of Dickinson county, reports that the transportation of pupils in the Pearl consolidated district and union consolidated district No. 2 has given satisfaction.

D. L. Katterjohn, principal of the consolidated school at Lorraine, Ellsworth county, states that two wagons are used for transportation, at thirty dollars per month each, and in addition to that each family transporting their own children, and living not more than two miles from the school, is paid seven and one-half cents per day for such transportation. Other families, living more than two miles and furnishing their own conveyance, are paid fifteen cents per day. He also states that the system of transportation in wagons is satisfactory. Some people whose children are large enough would rather have them go to school in their own conveyance, and as the district finds it cheaper, it yields to their preference.



LORRAINE UNION SCHOOL.

Miss Cordia Blaine, principal of the consolidated school at Haven, Reno county, states that the system of transporting pupils in wagons at that point is satisfactory. County Superintendent Hamilton says that the people in this district are all pleased, and it is said no one would return to the old way.

ARGUMENTS FOR CONSOLIDATION

BASED UPON REPORTS AS TO ITS OPERATION IN OTHER STATES.

The report of Supt. H. S. Gilhams for 1903-04 gives the following statement of facts as to consolidation in La Grange county, Indiana:

"1. The drivers carry watches and consult them while on the route.

"2. Each driver keeps the time of the consolidated school, generally standard.

"3. The rate of speed while on the route averages five miles per hour for the year.

"4. The time of arrival varies from ten to fifteen minutes prior to the opening of the schools.

"5. The more remote pupils ride about five miles, and sixty per cent. ride three miles or less.

"6. Children are kept comfortable by stoves, patent heaters, blankets and soapstones.

"7. The greatest advantage to the service is township ownership of hacks and the improvement of roads.

"8. The drivers exercise due responsibility in promptly and safely conveying the children to school and returning them to their homes; they also, by contract, prohibit questionable language, undue familiarity and boisterous conduct in or about the hacks.

"9. Eighty-five per cent. of the patrons have reported the consolidated school as their preference in comparison with the 'old way.'"

The dean of the Department of Agriculture of the University of Illinois caused a special investigation to be made of the consolidated schools in Indiana and Ohio, and below are some extracts from the report:

"Over sixty per cent. of the districts report the cost as less and the results as better after consolidation. About fifteen per cent. report the cost as being the same and ten per cent. that the system costs more, but the results are better. . . ."

"There are four things that are going to benefit this country: These are the telegraph, the daily mail, the electric car and the centralized schools in the county, and when you have gotten these you have all the advantages of the city in the country, and all the advantages of the country besides. I do not think I can advocate too strongly the centralized schools. . . ."

"The advantages of centralization are many. Among them, has been found that the attendance has been more regular; very seldom are the scholars absent. Much more interest is being taken and greater progress made. They have better literary privileges, better teachers, more competition in their work, and, in the end, are far more accomplished than would have been possible had they attended the district school. I might add further that it has been proven that the children have been warmer and more comfortable."

" . . . If a child is taken sick at the school he is sent home at public expense. This has occurred, I was told, four times in the past three years. As one of the parents said, 'It is a great comfort to know that if occasion demands it my child will be brought home.'"

"As to the character of the work done in this well-graded six-room high school as compared with that of the scattering schools, there is no room for argument, there is absolutely no comparison possible."

"Of the fifty-six persons interviewed in Gustava and Green townships, forty-five were in favor of the system, four were indifferent, and seven against, and of the seven who were against the system six were without children in attendance at school. The advantages of an up-to-date and thoroughly conducted high school were in this rural school shared alike by all the children of the township. Six months under the central system is as good as nine months under the old district plan. . . ."

"The poor man who has heretofore only been able to send his children to the district school now has the pleasure of seeing them securing the best education that could be provided by the county."

"The plan of centralization offers equal advantages to all the children of the township. It permits a better grading of schools and classification of pupils. It affords an opportunity for thorough work by adding more weeks of schooling and the addition of higher grades of study. Fewer but better and more capable teachers will be employed and retained; and, besides, it brings the stimulating influence of larger classes, with the spirit of emulation incident thereto. Small schools cannot have the vitalizing force that comes from larger numbers. Children who are transported in comfortable wagons are not exposed to the rigors of inclement weather. Tardiness and absence are almost unknown. The parents become more deeply interested in the schools. It results in better school buildings, better sanitary conditions, better equipment, and all of this at a less aggregate expense than under the small district plan."

A. B. Graham sent inquiries to parents in townships in Ohio having consolidated schools, and secured the information below:

"How does the driver announce his coming?" "By blowing a horn"; "Blows a whistle"; "Halloos"; "Does n't announce his coming; children learn about his regular times of coming."

"Does your child stand and wait for the wagon?" Every reply so far is "No."

"Is it necessary to clothe your child as heavily for the winter trips as under the old plan?" Seventy-five per cent. answer "No," fifteen per cent. "No difference," ten per cent. "Yes."

"Does your child attend school more regularly than under the old plan?" Eighty per cent. answer "Yes," twenty per cent. "See no difference."

"Does your child show an increase in its interest above what it was under the old plan?" Ninety per cent. answer "Yes," ten per cent. "No."

"Do your teachers show an increase in interest above what it was under the old plan?" Ninety per cent. answer "Yes," five per cent. answer "No," and five per cent. "Notice no difference."

"If it takes more time under the new plan than under the old plan; is it compensated for by better work?" Eighty-five per cent. answer "Yes," fifteen per cent. answer "Can't say" and "No."

"What effect have centralized or consolidated schools on the social and educational interests of the township?" Most who answered said that there has been great improvement.

"In the main, do you feel favorable toward centralized or consolidated schools to-day?" Seventy-five per cent. of those answering that they at first objected answered this question by saying "Yes." Some on the end of the longest route answered "No."

The president of the state board of education of Massachusetts reports that "in Massachusetts, at least, the plan of consolidation of rural schools is no longer an experiment, but is recognized in most of the towns of the commonwealth as a

means of raising the standard of education in rural communities.

In Connecticut, consolidation, as reported by the state superintendent, has been most advantageous to the state.

In Ohio the state commissioner of education is loud in his commendation of the plan.

In New Jersey the advantages enumerated in favor of consolidation are: (1) Economy; (2) better teachers and equipment; (3) better supervision; (4) regularity of attendance of pupils; (5) better educational spirit.

Wm. T. Harris, ex-United States Commissioner of Education, in his report on the subject of consolidation, says:

"Upon the success of this movement rests the chief hope for the improvement of the rural school. It is fortunate that a device which changes the ungraded school into a graded school involves a saving of expense. The improvement is well worth the trial, even were it to double the cost of the rural school; but, as will be seen by statistics, it is secured with an actual saving of expenditure. Better teachers, more sanitary buildings, less personal expenses on the part of the pupils, better classification, and many lesser advantages are commending this reform over the country."

Hon. Jno. F. Riggs, state superintendent of public instruction of Iowa, says, "The high school is as much the birthright of the country child as it is of the city child."

Hon. J. L. McBrien, state superintendent of public instruction in Nebraska, says, "The time is not far distant when the people of rural communities will demand for their children the same or equal educational privileges as are granted to children living in towns and cities. The children in the country soon become familiar with modern privileges and cannot fail to note the failure of the little rural school of their district to provide the modern facilities as found in the town and city schools."

The consolidated school affords these facilities.

E. Davenport, dean of the College of Agriculture of the University of Illinois, asserts, after an exhaustive investigation, that "*No case is on record in which the change has been made back again from consolidation to the small school.*"

The same authority states: "The most searching inquiry has failed to discover any disadvantage worthy of mention, except the possibility of children being taken ill at school. Inasmuch as the rules generally provide that such a child shall be immediately taken home in a comfortable conveyance, this seeming disadvantage is after all a substantial advantage over walking even a shorter distance. Indeed, the amount of travel under consolidation is far less than might be supposed, as the routes are seldom over four miles long." He then adds:

"The greatest difficulty in consolidating these scattered and weakly schools lies in the fact that it is a 'new thing.' We grow accustomed or 'hardened' to the disadvantages of a system long in use and come to look upon them as inherent in the case and altogether inevitable, but we have

little patience with the difficulties of a new system, many of which are imaginary and others will disappear with experience. And so it is that we bear the ills to which we have grown accustomed until they become intolerable, believing always that it is conservatism and not unthinking apathy that controls us.

"It throws light on a situation of this sort to reverse conditions. Suppose that consolidation had been the plan up to date, and that good graded schools doing high-school work were established in the country everywhere to which children were transported regularly and landed warm and dry every day, requiring six to eight wagons for each school.

"Suppose then the proposition should come up to dissolve these schools; to build eight houses in the township instead of one or two; to hire eight teachers instead of three or four; that each teacher should 'try to teach everything'; that the children, even little girls, should walk through mud and slush and in zero weather even as far as two miles or go without education; that under the new system all high-school work would of necessity be abandoned. What then would be thought of the present system if it came up as a new proposition for the consideration of sensible men?

"The arguments for such a change could not be many. It might sound well to advocate the putting of these horses and drivers to useful work, letting the children walk; but to build eight houses instead of one, and to hire eight teachers instead of three or four, all that a half dozen drivers and teams may earn something in other ways, would not seem economy. The schools would certainly suffer, as would the health of the little children. Let him who has a lively imagination tell us what the mothers would say whose children had always been transported warm and dry, when it should be seriously proposed that hereafter the little ones should wade while horses and mules spoiling for exercise stand in the barns and kick the boards off for sheer amusement or lack of exercise.

"It seems silly to draw this comparison, and yet it is sometimes necessary to look through the other end of the telescope in order to see things in their true proportions. The stubborn fact is that the old-time district school was fitted to a condition of things that has long since passed away. It is an antiquated institution and its days of usefulness in most country districts are practically over. It belongs with the scythe and the hand-rake and is of the days when corn was planted by hand. *If the consolidated system were the custom would we think of changing to the present one?* In seeking an answer to this question, let it be remembered that no locality that has tried it has ever changed back to the old way."

Kansas, from the view-point of its small schools and as to transportation, is better adapted to consolidation than are many other states. Kansas also is naturally as ready as any state in the Union to adopt the best, and acquaintance with the work of consolidation should result in a more rapid change to that system than has been experienced heretofore.

It is not held that all one-teacher rural schools may be profitably combined with others. The larger schools are sometimes so located as to make it unwise to attempt any such plan. Again, occasionally road conditions are such as to render an attempt of this kind not feasible. That there are, however, hundreds of schools that could with profit be united with others there can be no doubt. It does not follow that by consolidation is necessarily meant the transportation of all pupils.

The difficulties in the way of consolidation are bad roads and a dislike to see the schoolhouse placed at any location that is farther from the farm than the old site.

ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS.

Quoting from the Illinois report, the conclusions based upon a careful examination of the whole question of consolidation are as follows:

1. That many country school districts are so small and weak that no school is conducted.

2. That many others consist of but three or four pupils, and the expense for elementary schooling frequently rises to more than \$100 per pupil, which is higher than the tuition for collegiate instruction.

3. That at least one-third of the country schools are too small to be even fairly successful.

4. That when the school is of fair size, consisting of many classes of few each, with but one teacher to do the work, the time is frittered away in a large number of short recitations, often but five minutes each.

5. That fully one-third of all the teachers have had less than one year's experience and many never even saw a really good school.

6. That the best teachers are taken for the graded schools, and that of those *available for country* schools, from fifty to seventy-five per cent. are "young girls" who have had no more training than is given in the school they are to attempt to teach.

7. That when schools are established within walking distance of each other the above-mentioned conditions are certain to follow, and that the only way ever tried or even proposed by which these schools can be made effective is to combine them into smaller numbers with fewer and better teachers, whose work can then be better divided and better supervised.

8. That as conditions exist to-day little children walk long distances and suffer much discomfort and ill health by reason of exposure to storms and from sitting all day with wet feet and damp clothing after wading through snow-drifts, slush and mud on the way to school. This is especially true of young girls.

9. That the only humane way of putting children of all ages and conditions into school through all kinds of weather is to transport them in wagons that are covered and, when necessary, warmed.

10. That consolidation and transportation tend greatly to lessen expense, so that the same grade of schools can be had much cheaper, or a far better grade at the same expense, as patrons may desire; or, if they please, a full equivalent of the best city schools may be established and conducted at slightly greater cost than heretofore, and at a much lower rate than in the city.

11. That as things are to-day, without consolidation, country people not only pay more for elementary instruction alone than city schools cost, including the high-school course, but, in

addition, farmers pay out vast sums for tuition and other expenses of their older children attending city schools for what is not offered at home.

12. That though enormously expensive these schools are not effective, necessitating large additional outlay in sending the older children to the city schools at excessive cost and with much inconvenience, because done entirely as private enterprise and at personal cost.

13. That this condition often results in the whole family "moving to town to educate the children," to the damage of the school left behind, to the disadvantage of the business, at the expense of breaking up the old home, and at the risk of giving the family false ideas of both city and country life.

14. That the only proper way to educate a child up to and including the high school is to do it without disturbing his home or taking him out of it, and that the country child is entitled to as good an education as the city child and at no more risk or inconvenience to him or his family.

15. That it is not *necessary* to consolidate about a village school, but that wherever it is done the result should be a country school and not a city school.

16. That consolidation is the only way of securing really good country schools, and it is the only means of introducing the study of agriculture generally into the public schools.

17. No one can avoid the conclusion that the objections offered in advance of trial are mostly either fanciful or selfish; that they are not realized in practice; that consolidation is the only plan tried or proposed by which the country child can secure such an education as modern conditions demand, and such as is already afforded the city child.

18. It lessens the expense and equalizes the cost; it protects the health and morals of the child and makes the introduction of agriculture and the other industries possible; it enhances the value of farm property as a whole; it brightens and broadens country life; it preserves its virility unimpaired and rationalizes the movement toward population centers. Such difficulties as are found are trivial or transient, or both, and are such as would not stand in the way of any commercial enterprise for a moment.

19. Consolidation of country schools is the solution of the problem of agricultural education, and it is the only complete solution that has been offered.

As to statement No. 1 above, on page 6 of this bulletin, it will be seen that 170 school districts in this state maintained no school the last year.

That No. 2 applies in Kansas is shown on page 6.

That No. 3 is true in this state is made clear by the table on page 7.

Nos. 5 and 6 are commented upon with respect to Kansas on pages 3 and 4.

Referring to No. 11, it would be most interesting could we know the amount of tuition paid in this state by parents for the attendance of their children at public schools.

It has been estimated that in the state of Michigan nearly a million dollars per year has been paid for tuition alone. In the state of Kansas, hundreds of pupils are being sent to village or city schools every day. The fact is that the farmers are in reality supporting a double school system; one at home by process of taxation, the other in the nearest village in the form of tuition. It is estimated that in a single county in Illinois there has been paid out in this way for tuition in ten years \$30,000. In Ellsworth, Ellsworth county, Kansas, the tuition fees have averaged for a number of years not less than \$200 per annum, or \$2000 in ten years. The schools in a certain city of not more than 1500 people report to this office that for the past five years they have received not less than \$650 annually in tuition, amounting in ten years to \$6500. Undoubtedly the total for the state runs into many thousands of dollars; an amount of money that, if wisely expended, would have transported many times the number of these tuition pupils to centrally located schools in their own neighborhood.

Thus we see that the farmer is not only helping to support his own school system, but he helps to support that of his city neighbors.

OTHER ADVANTAGES.

Classification and organization are the key-note to every successful modern enterprise. The reason that the graded schools are superior is that the work of instruction is put upon a thorough basis of classification. In the one-teacher school the teacher must take all of the pupils through all of the grades, with the result that there is no opportunity for specialization, and with the further result that the recitation is so short as in many instances to be almost valueless. The average number of recitations in a country school is from twenty-five to thirty. Twenty-five recitations per day, with time taken out for movement of classes and recess, means an average period of not more than eleven minutes. It means that many of the recitations indeed are but little more than five minutes each. In our city schools the recitation period in the grades is from twenty-five to thirty minutes, and in the high school from thirty-five to forty-five minutes.

In the consolidated school with two or three teachers the recitation period is thus made relatively and definitely longer, but best of all there comes the larger attendance, with the incentive and the inspiration that is always born of numbers.

Again, there is afforded in such schools frequently an opportunity for one or two years of high-school work, thus keeping the boy and girl still longer under parental care. In the four schools mentioned of this state each has at least a two-

year high-school course. The Burns consolidated school has a four-year high-school course.

To my mind the two strongest advantages growing out of the consolidated school are, first, that it attracts and holds a larger number of pupils, and an older class of pupils; second, that there is opportunity not alone to teach text-book facts, but to take up such subjects as will acquaint the child with its environment—to lead it to know and understand something of the laws of nature, and of the principles that govern and control agriculture. The best physical laboratory in America is the well-regulated American farm. Here the boys and girls study nature at first hand; here they observe the growth of life and plants and animals; here they breathe pure air and become familiar with the beauties of the natural world; here they make character. To have added to all these natural advantages the high school, without the limitations of town life, is an ideal situation.

HOW TO CONSOLIDATE.

The county superintendent, with the assistance of educators and others, should divide the county into proposed consolidated districts. A map of the county showing the boundaries of those proposed districts should be made. Separate maps of each consolidated district should be placed in the hands of each educator and others interested in the movement. On the map of each proposed consolidated district the residences from which pupils attend school should be marked, and proposed routes of transportation should be laid out.

In platting counties into consolidated districts strong graded schools usually are acceptable centers for the location of the schools. Where such schools are not available as centers, the schools will be centrally located in territory that is entirely rural. Territory of the size of a township usually is preferable for a strong, economical and efficient consolidated school, though the consolidation of even two weak districts is always an advantage.

An estimate of the expense of maintaining the school of a proposed consolidated district before consolidation should be made, and an estimate of maintaining it after consolidation should also be offered. The data for such an estimate can be found in the annual report of the county superintendent.

The first outlay of the consolidated district should be for wagons, if the district decides to transport the children, and the moving of one or more of the best school buildings, and the erection of sheds for horses. That expense will be met in part, at least, by the sale of the abandoned school sites and some of the old school buildings.

In most cases it may be preferable to bring together the best of the abandoned schoolhouses for the use of the new consolidated district. Sheds for the horses may be constructed

out of the schoolhouse that is least salable. The other school buildings and the abandoned sites may be sold, and out of the proceeds the wagons may be purchased, the expense of moving the schoolhouses paid, and a larger school site for the consolidated school building obtained.

In presenting the advantages of consolidation, the active assistance of those who are most interested in the education of their children can readily be secured. Literature available upon the subject should reach as many as possible. The local papers will be willing to publish articles on the subject. Evening meetings to study the proposition and to hear papers and addresses on the proposed measure by local talent are profitable. Local educators are usually very willing to deliver evening addresses on consolidation. Outside talent also is usually available for evening addresses.

After a community is quite generally informed on the subject active steps toward consolidation may be undertaken. The county superintendent should be consulted as to the requirements of the law as to notices, the election, and other matters in connection with the formation of such a district.

In short, study well the local conditions; become familiar with the arguments and advantages in favor of consolidation; get the people interested in the proposition, and then hold one or more public meetings. If the sentiment is favorable, strike while the iron is hot, and proceed at once to an election. If two out of three districts are clearly in favor of consolidation, and the third district is doubtful, it is well to take action upon the first two, and let the consideration of the third district coming in be voted upon at some future time. The great point is to consolidate, and thus not only improve the schools concerned, but offer an object-lesson to others in the neighborhood.

(School Laws 1907, ch. VI.)

SEC. 155. *How Permanently to Disorganize and Consolidate.* [6151.] Whenever the inhabitants of two or more adjacent school districts of the state of Kansas desire to unite for the purpose of forming a single or union school district and conducting therein a graded school, the clerks of the several districts shall, upon a written application of five voters of their respective districts, or by order of the several school-district boards, call a meeting of the voters of such districts at their respective schoolhouses, by posting up printed notices thereof in like manner as provided for calling school-district meetings, and if a majority of the voters in each of two or more adjacent districts shall vote to unite for the purpose herein stated, the clerks of such districts shall thereupon, in writing, notify the county superintendent of such action: *Provided*, That the vote in any district shall be made conditional upon its carrying in certain other named districts proposing to unite. Upon such notice, it shall be the duty of the county superintendent, and he is hereby authorized, at his discretion, to declare the districts so voting disorganized, and to designate a time and place for a meeting of the voters of said district so voting, for the purpose of electing a board of directors, consisting of a director, clerk, and treasurer, notice of which meeting shall be given by printed notices, posted in five public places in the districts uniting: *Provided*, That if any district so uniting to form a union school district has a legally bonded indebtedness at the time of its disorganization, such in-

debtedness shall attach to and be a charge against the territory comprised in such disorganized district at the time of its disorganization, and it shall be the duty of the county commissioners of the county or counties in which such territory is located to cause annually to be levied upon the property, real and personal, in such disorganized territory, a tax sufficient to meet the interest and provide a sinking-fund for the payment of such indebtedness: *Provided further*, That the assets and property of the district disorganized shall first be applied in payment of its floating indebtedness, if any, and then on its bonded indebtedness, and any residue thereafter to belong to the new union district: *Provided further*, That in forming union districts comprising territory lying in more than one county the county superintendents of said counties shall act together as by law provided for in joint school districts. (Laws 1901, ch. 305, sec. 1.)

COST.

Certainly no plan to change, in any manner, our present system of rural schools can make any headway unless the item of cost is thoroughly considered and understood. However, in any discussion of consolidation, and the expenses incident thereto, it should be remembered that our present system is probably the most extravagant and wasteful, from a money standpoint, that could be devised. It has already been shown that the average rural school costs the taxpayer per capita anywhere from one hundred to several hundred per cent. more than the most elaborate system of city schools.

When we reflect further than one-half of the present number of teachers would be sufficient to teach all of the pupils of the state could they be conveniently grouped, we will readily see that the ultimate outcome of consolidation means a great saving to the people.

In almost every plan of consolidation, the cost after consolidation for the same number of months at the same wages for teachers is considerably less. For the same cost, the term usually can be materially lengthened and the wages of teachers increased.

That our small schools are costing the people an amount entirely out of proportion to the results obtained or the advantages offered has already been shown in a striking manner by the tables found on pages 9 and 10.

In support of the statement that the consolidated school is less expensive per capita, the attention of the reader is called to the following additional facts:

1. Under consolidation there is no duplication of libraries, of apparatus, and of other equipment necessary.

2. A considerable saving in fuel and heating equipment is effected.

3. Less outlay is required for maintenance, repairs and janitor service.

4. Less capital is invested in buildings.

5. In practically every case the number of teachers needed is largely reduced, thus making a definite saving.

6. Ordinarily enough can be saved through the various

means suggested to meet the extra cost of transportation. As a reward for this we have a more efficient school, better teachers, a longer term, the possibility of some high-school work, and the inspiration of numbers.

The following estimate of certain school districts may serve as a valuable illustration:

ESTIMATING THE COST OF CONSOLIDATION.

Below is an illustration of an average financial exhibit of a proposition to consolidate in a county densely populated (Shawnee):

Original Data, from Records.

| NO. OF DISTRICT. | Av. daily attend- ance. | Mo. school. | Teachers' wages. | Incidental expenses. | Total expenses. |
|------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 16..... | 30 | 8 | \$55 00 | \$200 77 | \$637 77 |
| 17..... | 17 | 7 | 50 00 | 125 49 | 475 49 |
| 18..... | 12 | 7 | 45 00 | 128 59 | 443 59 |
| 19..... | 14 | 7 | 36 00 | 67 23 | 319 23 |
| 20..... | 21 | 7 | 50 00 | 92 83 | 439 83 |
| 21..... | 13 | 7 | 47 00 | 86 15 | 419 55 |
| Totals..... | 107 | 43 | \$283 00 | \$702 06 | \$2,735 06 |
| Average..... | 18 | 7 $\frac{1}{6}$ | 47 16 | 117 01 | 482 51 |

Summary of Expenses Before Consolidation:

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Teachers' wages, fuel and repairs for 6 schools..... | \$2,735 06 |
| Interest at 5 per cent. on \$6000 (estimated) invest- ment in 6 schoolhouses..... | 300 00 |
| Depreciation (estimated) per year on 6 school build- ings | 240 00 |
| | <u>\$3,275 06</u> |

Exhibit of Expenses After Consolidation:

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| 3 teachers for 7 $\frac{1}{6}$ months, at \$47.16 per month..... | \$1,013 94 |
| 5 wagons for 7 $\frac{1}{6}$ months, at \$30 per month..... | 1,075 00 |
| Fuel, repairs, etc., for three schools..... | 351 03 |
| Interest at 5 per cent. on \$3000 invested in 3 school- rooms | 150 00 |
| Depreciation per year on three schoolrooms..... | 120 00 |
| Total | <u>\$2,709 97</u> |
| Net saving | \$565 09 |

By increasing the number of wagons to six, increasing the teachers' wages to \$55 per month and increasing the length of term to eight months, the net saving is still \$37.01.

Minor items almost negligible are omitted in the mode of estimating illustrated above.

The demand of the day is not for cheaper schools, however, but for better schools for the money invested. The question is not so much one of cost as it is one of returns for the money invested. The present rural-school system pays very dearly for what it offers in return.

If the consolidated school is sometimes more expensive it is almost invariably due to an increase in the wages of teachers and length of term of school. A comparison of the expense of maintenance before and after consolidation verifies this statement. The cost of maintaining both the small school and the consolidated school vary alike with the length of term and the wages of teachers. The cost in both cases is regulated by the desire and financial ability of patrons to provide superior educational advantages for their children.

The cost per pupil per month, based on average daily attendance before and after consolidation, is shown by the following statement:

In the consolidated school at Portis, Osborne county, the cost per month per pupil, based on average daily attendance, was \$3.62 just before consolidation and \$2.53 just after consolidation. In district No. 4, Rice county, five rural districts consolidated, and the cost per month per pupil, based on average daily attendance, was \$4.33 before consolidation and \$3.18 after consolidation. In Union No. 1, Rice county, the cost per month per pupil before consolidation was \$2.29, after consolidation \$2.20. In the consolidated schools at Milton, Sumner county, the cost per pupil per month was \$3.98 before consolidation, \$2.96 the first year after consolidation, and \$2.24 the second year after consolidation. In the Burns district the cost before consolidation was \$2.94, and \$2.50 the next year after consolidation.

COST IN OTHER STATES.

From the report of the minister of public instruction, of Victoria, Australia, the following extract is taken:

"Under the system of conveyance 241 schools have been closed. The saving in closed schools is £14,170 per annum. The attendance is so regular and the system so popular that applications are constantly made for its extension.

"Once when a man wished to sell his farm he advertised 'A school near.' Now he advertises 'Children conveyed to school.' Farms sell more readily now."

G. T. Fletcher, in his report on consolidation in Massachusetts, states that in Massachusetts sixty per cent. report the cost less under consolidation but the result better; fifteen per cent. report the same, but better results. Eighty per cent. report the cost more but the result better. The testimony as to the effect of attendance is nearly unanimous that the attendance is improved by conveyance of pupils.

The Report of the Department of Education of Massachusetts (1904) states that the expense of consolidation has generally been less than the cost of maintaining the schools at the time of closing them.

The following financial statement gives the gain due to consolidation in La Grange county, Indiana:

| | | |
|---|-----|-------------|
| Number of schools receiving conveyed pupils..... | 14 | |
| Number of schools abandoned..... | 38 | |
| Additional teachers required in the central schools..... | 7 | |
| Saving in number of teachers..... | 31 | |
| Saving in salaries of teachers..... | | \$10,651 60 |
| Saving in fuel and repairs..... | | 2,260 00 |
| Total saving | | \$12,911 60 |
| Number of pupils conveyed..... | 428 | |
| Number of hacks required..... | 29 | |
| Total cost for transportation for the year..... | | 6,176 86 |
| Net saving, not counting additional cost of fuel and janitor service in consolidated schools..... | | \$6,734 74 |

A further reference to the tables showing relative cost of graded and ungraded schools makes clear the proposition that the per capita cost is materially less in larger schools than in the small ones.

TRANSPORTATION OF PUPILS PRACTICAL.

According to the report on consolidation by Prof. E. Davenport, of the University of Illinois, "good country schools cannot be established within walking distance of each other. Transportation is inherent in any effective system, and it is inevitable. Consolidated country schools do not mean annihilated country schools with the children hauled away to the nearest city to be schooled on the wholesale plan. The thing that should come out of this is a real country school for country children, and whether it is located in a small village, at a crossing of the roads, or in some picturesque piece of woodland, it must breathe the atmosphere of country life; it must instill a love for country things, and it must teach in terms of a life that the country child understands."

Transportation is now in actual existence almost everywhere. Almost every high school has an attendance of pupils driving many miles to and from school and paying tuition. The same thing may be said with regard to the best graded schools. In Iowa, in 1905-'06, 7082 pupils paid \$48,827 in tuition below the high school, and in high schools in the same year 7343 pupils paid \$95,784 in tuition.

The transportation of pupils is an admitted success wherever consolidation has been tried. It has been tried both where the population is sparse and where it is dense; among the hills of Massachusetts and on the plains farther west; in the mud of Indiana and Ohio and on the fine roads of Kansas, and experience indicates that it is adapted to all those varying conditions.

RIVERS, HILLS, MUD AND SNOW-DRIFTS.

In laying out consolidated districts they should be located so that rivers will not interfere with transportation. The remarkable growth of consolidation among hills and sparsely

settled portions of Massachusetts, where it originated, indicates that it is even adapted to hilly and sparsely settled communities. The steady increase of the amount expended in that state for transportation, from \$22,000 in 1888-'89 to \$236,000 in 1905-'06, indicates that the transportation of pupils is a success even under the most unfavorable conditions.

Kansas, with its level plains, is far better adapted to consolidation than Massachusetts, with its hills. But in the few hilly communities of Kansas the average boy does not need to be told to jump out and walk up the hills. By this simple solution even the hilly portions of Kansas become fine territory for consolidation. It has become remarkably successful in states more muddy than the muddiest district in Kansas. The addition of a third horse, or even another team in the worst weather, does away with all objection on account of muddy roads. The boys, as in the case of steep hills, will not need to be told to walk around "mud-holes," or the driver can find the same way around that the driver of the rural mail wagon finds. In muddy weather, "the free school wagon" will be found running every day that any other wagon runs. The horses can be trusted to travel along the roads every day that little pupils are able by walking to attend school. Even snow-drifts offer no disadvantages, for when the horses cannot travel through the snow-drifts it is quite certain that little children would not be expected by their parents to make their way through them.

The roads are muddy but a short time in the year in any portion of the state, and in the larger portion of Kansas the roads remain fine throughout the year; in fact, are almost ideal for the transportation of pupils.

AVAILABILITY OF HORSES.

In the wheat belt of Kansas, except in harvest time, there usually is a surplus of teams sufficient to transport the pupils. In the corn belt of the state April is about the only month during the school year, if there are eight months, when there are not enough surplus teams to transport all the pupils. The surplus teams so carefully housed from storms might better be earning their feed by transporting pupils and giving delicate young children the advantage of proper protection from mud and storm. When the wagons are driven by trustworthy young men attending school, the wages of thirty dollars per month for driving the wagons become almost clear profit for nearly the entire school year.

DRIVERS OF WAGONS.

The wagons are being driven successfully by women, by elderly people, and by older pupils. Teachers sometimes contract both to drive the wagon and to teach in the consolidated school. Sheds are usually constructed on the school-grounds so that the horses may remain there until the close of school. Drivers not connected with the school often secure employment

in the vicinity of the school for themselves and teams during the hours when school is in session.

When drivers return home in the morning an average of about four hours is required daily for transporting pupils. From the above considerations it is conclusive that the transportation of pupils can be accomplished rather cheaply, and with little interference with the industrial activities of the community.

CONTROL IN WAGONS.

The pupils are under the control of the driver, who is under contract to arrive at school on time, to maintain proper discipline in the wagon, to refrain from the use of tobacco and profanity, and to report to the teacher improper conduct on the part of pupils. The driver may be given authority to require pupils to walk as a punishment for offenses committed. That authority is given the drivers in the Burns district, yet no driver has ever found it necessary to resort to it as a punishment. The association in the wagons is under much better regulation than exists on the average playground.

RIDING VERSUS WALKING.

Riding in a closed wagon is so much more comfortable that even in pleasant weather the pupils would rather ride from three to five miles than walk one mile. The free school wagon, like the street-car of the city, removes the objection of distance and brings all into easier access to school.

When the roads are good the teams can usually make nearly average driving speed. The comfort of riding is such that the consolidated school is much more easily reached than the abandoned schools. The general experience of pupils is that riding is not tiresome, and much to be preferred to walking. The playground will furnish sufficient exercise.

Electric interurban railways have been used successfully for the transportation of pupils to consolidated schools, and they offer an almost ideal means for transportation. There is no reason why consolidation should not be effected rapidly along the electric lines of the state.

SAFETY OF TRANSPORTATION.

The transportation of pupils is proving to be entirely satisfactory, both as to the safety of pupils and as to the care exercised by drivers. For all other purposes there is no hesitancy in using horses as a general means of conveyance. It would be inconsistent to make an exception of transportation of pupils to school. People generally do not hesitate to ride on trains, even if wrecks have not ceased to occur. The same persons, however, have no hesitancy in risking small children to walk to and from school at the risk of flying missiles, pugnacious fists, and even falling from trees, not to speak of

unguarded associations and exposure to storms. By comparison a selected team driven by a bonded driver becomes after all about the safest means of transportation.

TRANSPORTATION HUMANE.

Experience is conclusive that transportation is more humane than walking, and that exposure to rain, snow, sleet, north winds, and sitting in the schoolroom with damp feet and damp clothing, cause much of the sickness among school children. It is reported by some that transportation reduces appreciably the doctor bills.

PROVISION WHEN PUPILS ARE TAKEN SICK AT SCHOOL.

When pupils become sick at school it is customary for school boards to make special arrangements for medical attention where a physician is available, and for taking pupils home promptly when it is advisable. In practice, but few cases of sickness require special trips to take pupils home.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

Frequently the best school buildings are moved together in preference to erecting a new school building. The remaining school buildings and the abandoned school sites may be sold and the proceeds applied toward purchasing wagons and moving the schoolhouses together. The material of the poorest schoolhouse might be used for the construction of sheds for the horses. It is preferable that several acres be provided for site of the consolidated school. In purely rural communities, especially where residences near the central school are not available, one of the school houses might be remodeled into a residence for the principal. Such an arrangement would go far toward securing a permanent teaching force.

REMOVAL OF SCHOOLHOUSE.

The removal of the little schoolhouse substitutes a building larger, more useful, more easily accessible and more worthy of the pride and the devotion of every friend of education. It enlarges the community and intensifies the community interests. It enhances the value of real estate in every part of the consolidated district. This statement is borne out by the experience of such school districts as those at Burns and Milton. A much greater consideration is that it broadens and enriches the lives of those who live in the community. It is the universal experience that an improvement in the educational advantages of a community enhances the value of real estate and makes that community a more desirable place in which to live.

SUMMARY OF THE ADVANTAGES OF CONSOLIDATION.

It permits a better grading of the school and better classification of the pupils. Consolidation allows pupils to be placed in graded schools where they can work to the best advantage and where more time can be given to the recitation.

The time of the teacher is not frittered away by having to teach a larger number of classes.

By employing several teachers, each teacher can have ample time for each class, and some high-school work can also be added.

It insures the enrolment of a larger percentage of the persons of school age.

It insures a better attendance from those enrolled.

It opens the door to more weeks of schooling, and to schools of a higher grade.

It keeps the larger boys and girls in school a longer time, and especially those advancing beyond the discipline and instruction of the smaller school.

Greater results are accomplished in the same length of time.

Better management is secured.

The discipline in consolidated schools averages much better than that in schools of but one teacher.

Better school officials can be secured by having a much larger district from which to select them.

Petty jealousies interfere less with the best interests of the school.

The larger number of classes already required makes the need of more than one teacher for any school apparent.

The general demand for more subjects in the course of study emphasizes the fact that a larger institution than the one-teacher school is required.

The course of study can be made more complete.

It affords an opportunity for thorough work in special branches, such as drawing, music, and elementary agriculture.

Special teachers could be employed to divide their time among such consolidated schools.

By consolidation we are taking a long step forward in solving the problem "How to keep the boys on the farm." Such a school may become the social and intellectual center of the community.

By this plan the farm again, as of old, becomes the ideal place in which to bring up children, to give them the advantages of centers of population, and have them spend their evenings in the home.

The classes are larger, and hence more interesting.

It awakens healthy rivalry through the inspiration of numbers.

The large classes bring interest, enthusiasm and confidence.

Large classes inspire the strong students to excel and the others to imitate their example.

Closer relationship, more varied intercourse and friendly class rivalry tend to stimulate interest. The classes become stronger, pupils continue longer in school, and frequently secure higher education.

The larger numbers make the games more interesting, make such games as baseball possible, and hence contribute to the attractiveness of school life.

The social life of the pupil is widened and the circle of acquaintance extended. The larger association improves the manners of the pupils, strengthens their individuality, broadens their experience with others, and makes them better and more intelligent citizens.

It quickens public interest in the schools. Pride in the kind and quality of work done is made manifest.

It brings to the people of a larger area a certain community of feeling, a certain companionship and charity which would otherwise hardly be possible. Sectarian and political differences are not so noticeable and the people become better acquainted.

It is the only means of realizing free high schools for all and accessible to all.

The extension of the course of study so as to give some high-school instruction follows consolidation. At age of from thirteen to fifteen years, when pupils should be ready for high school, the natural place for them to live is in their own homes under parental care. Even a year or two of high-school education at home prepares the child much better to be among strangers while continuing his education.

The larger boys and girls are kept in school, are given better instruction, and are offered many advanced subjects.

A larger proportion of the pupils are enabled to complete their preparation for the high school.

All the children have the same chances for higher educational advantages, which, under the present plan, only a small percentage can have, and that at great expense, by leaving home and going to the city.

A larger number have high schools to enter. Hence, a much larger number enter high school.

The rich and the poor will have more nearly equal advantages in securing a high-school education. What is now the privilege of a few will become equally the opportunity of all.

It gives an opportunity to the promising, ambitious boy or girl, regardless of wealth, and in return the state is endowed richly with a citizenship of superior quality and efficiency.

Parents and children become more contented when good school advantages are brought to them in the country.

Better teachers can be employed, hence better schools.

Good teachers gravitate toward positions having systematized work.

Teachers are retained longer, and hence become more efficient.

Good teachers may be more easily retained than in the small ungraded school.

The consolidated school secures a larger share of the experienced teachers and those who have had normal training.

The better salaries paid will enable a larger proportion of the teachers to secure high-school and normal training as a preparation.

The plan insures systematic and close supervision by the principal, and makes the visitation of county superintendents more efficient by saving much time from travel and permitting visitations much more frequently.

Close supervision will give the inexperienced teachers wise daily assistance and guidance, and greatly improve their efficiency.

The buildings are more comfortable and convenient, and better adapted to school purposes. The same number of rooms can be constructed more cheaply when combined in one building than when constructed separately.

Pupils can have the advantages of better schoolrooms—better heated, better ventilated and better supplied with apparatus.

Better equipment for primary work can be secured. Instead of the charts, globes and other apparatus duplicated in the separate schools a much larger variety can be secured for the same outlay.

The larger school means better libraries and hence good literature.

It reduces irregular attendance.

It eliminates truancy.

It reduces tardiness to a minimum.

It makes compliance with our compulsory-attendance law more feasible and justifiable.

It is the general testimony that the health of the pupils is better because of transportation facilities.

The pupils are protected from storms; quarreling and fighting on the way to and from school are prevented; the opportunity for intimidation and acts of violence by the strong towards the weak is removed.

The morals of the pupils are guarded and controlled on the way to and from school.

Pupils use the same conveyance to attend both the grades and the high schools.

The consolidated school usually becomes the trading-point, and the parents, through pupils, have daily access to the trading center, and can attend to matters which otherwise would require time and attention.

The school wagons can be used for transportation to entertainments, lectures and concerts.

It decreases the aggregate cost or gives greater efficiency at the same cost.

More is saved in incidental expenses, and the people undoubtedly secure larger returns for the money invested.

There is a saving in the very heavy expense of sending pupils away from home to high schools, or of moving to town to educate the children.

It gives value received for the amount expended.

It enhances the value of real estate, but the greatest gain is in the enrichment of the lives of the young.

The consolidated school has gone far beyond the experimental stage. Its advantages are as well confirmed as are the disadvantages of the one-teacher rural school.

The central school has more dignity, more character, more force than the rural school, and evokes more pride, interest and support on the part of the people. At every point of comparison the consolidated school is confidently claimed to be superior in all respects to the school of one teacher, and at all material points of comparison the entire system of consolidation has been demonstrated by experience to be superior to the system that is gradually being replaced by it.

The objections to consolidation are almost invariably either fanciful or selfish. Trivial excuses are offered to outweigh the most precious inheritance that a child may receive.

The large number of pupils from ungraded schools who are attending graded schools and paying tuition in them is a strong evidence of the superiority of the graded school. That there is no appreciable opposite movement of pupils from the graded to the ungraded schools is an additional evidence that the former is superior. The most satisfactory organization in the graded school is one in which only one grade is assigned to each teacher. But the school in which two or three grades are assigned to one teacher is still a vast improvement over the system requiring one instructor to attempt to teach all the eight grades. The common experience of teachers of rural schools is that they do not have time to carry out the standard methods of teaching; they do not have sufficient time to teach the large number of classes that they ordinarily must form, for many of these have but from five to ten minutes each. For that reason all the work of the teacher must fall far short of what it would be in a properly graded school.

Since there is not time for the work ordinarily demanded, subjects that should be taught, such as music, drawing and agriculture, are crowded out of the course, or if admitted are quite sure to receive but a small portion of the attention that properly belongs to them.

It is the common experience that most of the causes of complaint against teachers do not exist after consolidation. The conclusion is that the complaints are largely chargeable against the system in which the teacher is placed, rather than against the teacher herself. Under close supervision, with a smaller number of classes—though the classes themselves be

larger—the work of the teacher would be far more successfully done.

There are 508,000 boys and girls of school age in the state of Kansas. Of this number fully seventy per cent. receive their elementary training in the rural schools, or in villages having a population of 1000 or less. The great majority of our trained and experienced teachers are found in the graded schools only. Because of short terms, small schools, inexperienced teachers, lack of sufficient supplies and apparatus, and of impossible demands made upon the teachers of the rural schools, the boys and girls of the country are by no means receiving the training to which they are entitled.

From every consideration, both financial and intellectual, more careful attention should be given to our common schools. In addition to an attempt to solve this problem through the plan of consolidation, there should unquestionably be added state aid. Kansas appears to be the only state in the Union in which there is neither a state nor a county tax for school purposes. Shall we not, as citizens and parents, take up this question of paramount interest and insist upon it that ampler and freer opportunities be offered to the 350,000 boys and girls to whom the city schools and the high schools are not available?

I plead for the boy and the girl everywhere, that they shall have equal advantages; that the people of this great state see to it that they shall have not alone opportunity for high-school and college training, but that they shall have a firm and sound foundation upon which to rest such education. However much we may desire higher education for all, the cold fact remains, and probably always will remain, that the vast majority of the youth of our land will never get a school training beyond the people's college—the public high school.

THE WORTH OF A BOY.

What is a boy worth? What is an education worth? An Indiana jury awarded \$599.99 for the killing of a boy. A friend of mine, who is a superintendent in West Virginia, called that award an outrage. I asked him why. He answered: "To say nothing of the value of the boy's personality and all that a boy is to his father and mother and home, the commercial value of a boy's time at school is more than the award of that Indiana jury." I asked him how he made the calculation. He said: "You find the value of a boy's time at school by subtracting the earnings of a life of uneducated labor from the earnings of a life of educated labor." Then he gave me a calculation that I have used this year before every institute, for I am anxious to get it into the daily papers, to have it carried to every schoolroom and put upon every blackboard, so that the pupils may carry it home and discuss it with their parents.

He said: "If an uneducated man earns \$1.50 a day for 300 days in a year, he does very well; and if he keeps it up for forty years he will earn $\$1.50 \times 300 \times 40$, or \$18,000. An educated man is not generally paid by the day, but by the month and by the year. If you will strike an average of the earnings of educated men, beginning with the President of the United States, who earns \$50,000 a year, the presidents of the insurance companies and of large railroad companies, and run down the scale until you come to the lower walks in point of earnings among educated men, you will admit that \$1000 is a low average for the earnings of educated labor. For forty years you have \$40,000 as the earnings of an educated man. Subtract \$18,000 from \$40,000, and the difference, or \$22,000, must represent the value of a boy's time spent at school getting an education."

You will all admit that a man who works with his hands at unskilled labor puts forth as much muscular effort as a man who earns a livelihood by his wits and education. Now, if \$22,000 represents the value of time a boy spends at school getting an education, what is the value of a day spent at school?

The average school life of every boy and girl in Massachusetts is seven years of 200 days each; let us say that it takes four years more to get a good education. Reckoning eleven years of 200 days each, you will find that the 2200 days at school are equal to \$22,000, and a simple division on the blackboard will bring it home to the comprehension of every boy that each day at school, properly spent, must be worth ten dollars.

One director asks whether it is a violation of the compulsory law if a farmer keeps at home his eleven-year-old boy to plow, because it costs one dollar a day to get some man to do it. While he is putting one dollar into his own pocket, he is robbing the boy of ten dollars in the shape of future earning capacity. Is not that high-handed robbery by the father of his own child?—*N. C. Schaeffer, in Pennsylvania Report.*

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